Well-written

A fit Rebuke to a ludicrous INFIDEL:

IN SOME

REMARKS

ON

Mr. *Woolston*'s Fifth Diſcourſe

ON THE

MIRACLES of our SAVIOUR.

WITH

A PREFACE concerning the Proſecution of ſuch Writers by the CIVIL POWERS.

Riſu inepto res ineptior nulla eſt. CATULL.

By *SIMON BROWNE.*

LONDON:

Printed for RICHARD FORD, at the *Angel*, in the *Poultry*, near *Stocks-Market*. M.DCC.XXXII.

(Price 1*s.* 6*d.*)

Wks. Wilberf. Notes Joseph Parker

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

THE retirement and ſolitude, at a great diſtance from *London*, in which the author of the following diſcourſe, lives, is one reaſon of the late writing of it, and its appearing no ſooner in the world. And though every part of Mr. *W*'s papers have been already conſidered by ſeveral able hands, and this part of them has been particularly conſidered in the very juſt and judicious *Vindication* of my worthy collegue Mr. *N. Lardner*; yet 'tis apprehended this diſcourſe will appear a maſculine iſſue, though born a little out of due time; and to be a more diſtinct account, and to have many uſeful remarks and obſervations, which have eſcaped the notice of thoſe who have gone before him. It will be a ſatisfaction and pleaſure to the *chriſtian* reader, and may poſſibly prove a means of conviction to *others*, to ſee three of the greateſt miracles of the goſpel, ſo throughly ſifted, and cleared of every pretence and ſhadow of exception.

Advertiſement to the Reader.

THE *Preface* is a vigorous plea for liberty, and againſt civil proſecutions for matters of opinion in religion: 'tis writ with a great deal of evidence; I hope, without any offence.

I have only further to acquaint the reader, that the worthy author is preparing for the preſs a large and diſtinct anſwer to *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation*, which may be expected in due ſeaſon. I earneſtly recommend his preſent afflicted caſe, under a deep and peculiar melancholy, to the compaſſion and prayers of all his friends, and every ſerious chriſtian.

W. HARRIS.

PREFACE.

I *Always uſed to think, that neither* Chriſtianity, *nor any of the* Truths *taught in it, could ſuffer by thorough* examination, *or* fair debate. *The* evidences *for it, will bear the moſt exact and accurate ſcrutiny. Nor could I ever think it could be for its prejudice to have theſe ſet in the* ſtrongeſt light: *and yet very* ſerious doubts *have ariſen in the minds of the wiſeſt and beſt of men. And ſhould any ſuch ariſe, as are too much for themſelves to maſter,* what harm *were there in publiſhing them, that the matter might be cleared up to* themſelves *and the* world?

NOR *could I ſee reaſon why* profeſſed unbelievers *ſhould be hindred from offering their reaſons againſt it. The* firſt preachers *of Chriſtianity thought it reaſonable,* no doubt, *though they did not expect* it, *that* all men *where they came ſhould give them the hearing, weigh what they ſaid, compare the* religion *they taught, with that in which themſelves had been educated, and not cry them down with* noiſe, *or cruſh them with* power. *And ſo would any chriſtian preachers now, who were to go on the ſame errand. And what chriſtians would* reaſonably *expect from* others, *they ſhould* readily *allow to others, or they tranſgreſs that excellent rule of their Maſter*,* of doing to others as they would have others do to them. *If it would be unreaſonable and injurious in* heathens *and* mahometans, *to run* them *down with clamour and violence, when they ſought by fair rea-*

ſoning

* Luke vi. 31.

ſoning only, to ſhew the falſhood *of their* religion; they *would think ſo, would they act equitably, when by clamour and power they ſtop the mouths of thoſe, who by* argument *only endeavour to ſhew the falſhood of theirs.*

NOR *is this for the* honour *of Chriſtianity itſelf. Can it not ſtand againſt fair argument, that recourſe muſt be had to the* Civil Power, *for its defence? It is* treachery *to it, to do any thing, that fairly carries ſuch an intimation. If it can, let its* profeſſors *and* miniſters *defend it, and ſhew the weakneſs of what is objected againſt it, and in this* manly *way* convince *and* ſilence gainſayers; *not padlock their mouths, by making it penal to gainſay it at all. If they take ſuch a method to ſupport it, both* enemies *and* indifferents *will be ready to ſuſpect, they diſtruſt either their* religion *or* themſelves; *that* that *is not defenſible, at leaſt, that* they *cannot defend it. Or elſe, that* they *are content their religion ſhould ſhift for itſelf, if they,* by power, *may ſecure the worldly emoluments annexed to it. And this is the way to diſgrace their* religion, *and bring* themſelves *into diſeſteem.*

ONE *would think too, that Chriſtianity looks beſt like* its ſelf, *when it looks moſt like its* author, *the* meek *and* lowly Jeſus *, who did not ſtrive, nor cry, nor lift up his voice in the ſtreets. *He neither propagated his religion by* force, *nor run down its adverſaries with* noiſe: *but would have it inſinuate into mens hearts, in a way* rational *and* divine, *by conviction of its heavenly truth and original, wrought by proper* evidence, *and the enlightening of his* holy Spirit, *and ſhew its* power *in the life by* genuine fruits *of holineſs and virtue; without which, the* profeſſion *can never be acceptable to him, nor of any advantage to them who make it.*

AND outward force *is as unfit to ſupport it, eſpecially againſt* meer *argument, as it was at firſt to propagate it.* Such *a method ſeems to have more of that* † wrath *in it,* that worketh not the righteouſneſs of God, *than of the diſpaſſionate, mild, kind and merciful temper of* Jeſus.

* Matt. xii. 19. † Jam. i. 20.

Jeſus. *Is it not moſt for the* honour *of his religion, that* its ſelf, profeſſors *and* miniſters *ſhould, in this reſpect, be like him, and by kind and gentle* uſage *ſupple, as well as by* ſound reaſon *and* ſpeech *convince gainſayers?*

And *though there is a vaſt difference between* petulant cavils *againſt the religion of* Jeſus, *and* ſober argument; *between* ludicrous inſult *and* ſcurrilous invective, *and* grave reaſonings, *and* manly decent talk *againſt it: yet if any who do, or profeſs to disbelieve it, aſſault it with theſe weapons, and endeavour to expoſe it to ſcorn; can this do it any real harm? Would it become* abſurd *and* ridiculous, *by ſenſeleſs cavils, empty jeſts, and rude invective? or* appear *ſo to any who underſtood it, valued it, felt or deſired to feel its* power? *or to any* others, *who had common ſenſe, or common reverence for things ſacred? And if not, muſt not ſuch* oppoſers, *in the end, make* themſelves *ridiculous, inſtead of* Chriſtianity? *even tho' they mingled ſome* ſhew *of argument with their banter and ſcurrility. The* utmoſt *miſchief they could do, would be to raiſe a laugh among people of a* low taſte, *and* gay *and* trifling humour, *that could be tickled with ribaldry; and beget a conceit in* them, *that Chriſtianity is a thing to be laughed at, becauſe this talk ſets them a giggling. But is the religion of* Jeſus *hurt hereby? or would it be* honoured, *by having others of this make among its* profeſſors? *Are they ever the* more *Chriſtians for bearing the name?*

The bleſſed Author *of this religion, was the jeſt and ſcorn, at times, of the* witty, *the* wiſe, *the* learned, *the* nobles, *and the* rabble. *His religion was* * reviled *and* blaſphemed *by the* Jews; *deſpiſed and ſcorned as* † fooliſhneſs, *by the* ſelf-admiring Greeks: *yet he never exerted his divine power to avenge theſe inſults on* him *or his* religion. *If men, inſtead of yielding to the evidence he offered, and* receiving his truth in the love of it, *rejected, renounced, reproached and railed at it, he did not miraculouſly puniſh them with* death, *or any leſſer* corporal penalties. *Nor is there any thing in the*

* Act. xiii. 45. † 1 Cor. i. 23.

apoſtolical ſtory *like it, but* * Paul's *ſtriking* Elymas *blind for a ſeaſon; which does not ſeem to have been done ſo much in a vindictive way, as to make* † *a* Convert *of* Sergius Paulus *to the faith, which* penalties *inflicted by civil rulers have no* fitneſs *to do.* Fides ſuadenda eſt, non imperanda, *as* Lactantius *rightly ſays*; Faith muſt be the effect of perſuaſion, not conſtraint. *Nor is there any thing in the whole religion of* Jeſus, *as recorded in the* New Teſtament, *that gives* orders *or* allowance *to* chriſtian magiſtrates, *with* fines, whippings, pillories, *&c. to puniſh the deſpiſers or rejecters of his religion, or ſtop their mouths who implead or revile it.*

YET *if the* honour *of his religion, when thus* contemned, *needed or required* ſuch *vindication, it is ſtrange himſelf ſhould ſhew no ſuch regard to it, but be patient under all the* reproaches *thrown on him and it, and ſend his* Apoſtles *out to preach it, armed with the ſame patience, and authorized to* perſuade *men to receive it, but not* terrify *them into the* profeſſion *of it, nor* corporally puniſh *them, if they rejected or reviled it. And was not* ſuch patience, *much more honourable to him, and his religion, and them who ſpread it, than* reſentment *of ſuch uſage, or* revenge *for it.*

AND *is it not alike honourable in the preſent* miniſters *and* profeſſors *of it? Is it not ſtill enough that* ‖ wiſdom is juſtified of her children? *Can it be expected, that when it does not gain or ſubdue mens hearts, it ſhould eſcape the* laſh *of their tongues or pens, eſpecially when by its* heavenly *tendency, and* holy laws, *it carries ſuch oppoſition in it to their luſts and taſte? And ſhould its* profeſſors *reſent and revenge this, and make them feel the weight of their hands? Is not this worſe than upon* ‡ reviling to revile again? *which* Jeſus *never did, and his* ** *religion ſtrictly forbids. Theſe* reproaches *of the religion of* Jeſus *are deſerved, or they are* not. *To ſay they* are, *is to join in the reproach: and if they are* not, *this may be made appear, and the power*

* Act. xiii. 11. † ver. 12. ‖ Matt. xi. 19. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 23.
** Rom. xii. 14, 17. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

power and excellency of it, manifeſted by patience under them, the mean while. Thus Jeſus *vindicated himſelf, and his religion; ſo did his* Apoſtles; *ſo ſhould all his* Diſciples. *But to fly out into paſſion, and return theſe reproaches with hurtful revenge, is not to copy the* example *of* Jeſus, *nor give a fair* character *of his religion. And if men cannot bear the* banter *of trifling wits for its ſake, how are they likely to ſuffer* bonds, impriſonment, *or* death?

And *if it be not for the* honour *of Chriſtianity, for private chriſtians to beat and hurt thoſe who revile it, and repay their* wrong *and* contempt *with* ſuch *injury; I cannot ſee, that it is for its* honour, *for* chriſtian magiſtrates *to do, what is in effect the ſame,* viz. *avenge it with* proſecutions *and* penalties. Revenge *for ſuch injurious uſage, is no more decent in* them, *than in* private perſons, *though* legal forms *may put a better face on it: and the* temper *of their* maſter *ſhould be as conſpicuous in* them *as in* others. Jeſus *and his religion look better like themſelves, by patience under ſuch abuſe, than paſſionate revenge for it.* Magiſtrates *may indeed think their* wiſdom *affronted, and* their authority *deſpiſed, who have thought meet to profeſs and countenance this religion, if it be reproached; and may reſent this, and by proſecutions ſhew their reſentment: but this is really a meer* human concern *for their* own *honour, not a* chriſtian concern *for the honour of* Jeſus's *religion.* This *would be much more honoured by their ſharing in its reproach, and* patience *under it, than ſuch a vindication as the* example *of* Jeſus *does not recommend, his* goſpel *no where enjoins or allows, nor does at all ſeem ſuited to his* ſpirit, *or that of his religion.*

Nor *is ſuch a concern for their* own honour, *ſo creditable to their religion, as at firſt appearance it may ſeem. The affront is not aimed at* them. *They are affronted only by* implication *and* innuendo, *as far as the reproach of the religion they profeſs and countenance, involves* theirs *in it. If their* religion *be not really diſcredited by ſuch reproaches, neither are they. But* ſuch attempts *to vindicate their honour, will, by a like* implication, *tend to*

the

the diſcredit of their *religion: for they look as if they were fearful of it. And why fearful of their* honour, *which is not immediately affected, but in* ſympathy *only with their religion? Muſt not this imply a fear of the diſcredit of their religion? And what does this intimate, but a* diſtruſt *of its* goodneſs, *and that it cannot bear up againſt ſuch* ſcoffers, *unleſs* they *ſtretch out the* hand *of power, and by* proſecutions *and* penalties, *put them to ſilence. Is this for the credit of the religion of* Jeſus? Magna eſt veritas, & prævalebit. Great is truth, and it will prevail. *Chriſtian truth has prevailed againſt confederated* wit, learning, *and* power. *Can it not keep its ground in a* chriſtian nation, *where it is the profeſſion of the* learned *in all faculties, and the* rulers *too, no not againſt meer* banter *and* ſcurrility? *What a reproach to it, is the very* ſuſpicion? *Why then ſhould* chriſtian magiſtrates *diſcover any thing of a* panic, *by falling on them with the weight of their* power, *who make ſuch* rude *and* impotent, *and the more impotent, for that they are ſuch* rude *aſſaults on it?*

As *I have hinted before, I meet with no directions in the* New Teſtament, *for* magiſtrates *to interpoſe in religious* diſputes, *require the* belief, (profeſſion *I mean, for it can go no farther*) *of what they judge right, and enjoin all others,* ſilence. *And in* nature *I cannot ſee, why* one *magiſtrate ſhould claim this power more than* another; *a* chriſtian *more than an* heathen *or* mahometan, *or* one *chriſtian more than* another. *But if* all *magiſtrates may claim and exerciſe this power,* Chriſtianity *muſt in moſt countries be enjoined ſilence; and in moſt* chriſtian countries error *will be declared* truth, *and all* defenders *of* truth *enjoined ſilence.*

And *is ſuch a ſituation of things likely to help or hinder the ſpread of Truth or Chriſtianity? Would not* free liberty *to propoſe it to mankind, offer the evidences for it, and debate it with oppoſers, be a likely way to* ſpread, ſettle, *and* eſtabliſh *it in the world? And can that* liberty, *which is ſo proper to ſpread and ſettle it every where, hurt it when it is eſtabliſhed, or* diſſettle *it again? Would it, on this* foot, *eſtabliſh itſelf, and yet*

can

can it not maintain itſelf where it is eſtabliſhed, unleſs magiſtrates *interpoſe with their power, and* ſilence all *who ſay any thing* againſt it? *Is it not unaccountable, that chriſtian* miniſters *or* magiſtrates *ſhould go into any meaſures, that countenance ſuch a ſuſpicion. Or, when once* Chriſtianity, *by ſuch* freedom, *becomes eſtabliſhed, muſt it maintain itſelf, by denying this freedom, to all who would diſpute it? Would this be* equitable? *Or, becauſe* Chriſtianity, *cannot meet with this fair uſage from the other* powers *of the* world, *ſhould this be done by way of* repriſal, *on thoſe who in chriſtian nations take this liberty with Chriſtianity? Do then thoſe rulers act* a wiſe part, *and for the credit of their religion, who fence it with their power, againſt thoſe who deſire to uſe no other arms againſt it, but* reaſon *and* argument? *Do they act a* juſt part, *to thoſe who would ſhew the* falſhood *of their religion to them and their ſubjects, and only appeal to their own* reaſon, *whether it be ſo or no? Do they act a* reaſonable part, *and as* becomes men, *who would ſtop their own and their ſubjects ears, and ſtop their* mouths, *who only deſire to recommend, what they ſay againſt their religion, to every man's* reaſon *and* conſcience? *No one can think ſo. And do* chriſtian magiſtrates *act more* wiſely, *or* righteouſly, *or* reaſonably, *by ſilencing thoſe, who, in the ſame method, oppoſe their religion, and employ no other* weapons *againſt it, but the beſt reaſons and arguments they can; and for want of better,* laugh *themſelves, and endeavour to make* others *laugh at it? And ſhould they then allow themſelves in ſuch* repriſals?

WHY *then ſhould they* proſecute *them? Not to convince* unbelievers *themſelves. Such arguments carry no conviction with them. They may provoke mens wrath, but 'twill let in no* light *upon their Minds, nor make a way for religion into the* heart; *and yet, without this, there is no religion.* Si animus averſus, *as* Lactantius *rightly obſerves,* nulla eſt. *By theſe means, men may poſſibly be induced to make a* profeſſion *of it, without believing it; but this can do* no good *to them, nor bring*

any

any credit *to it. It is the* excellency *of a religion in its ſelf, recommending it to a man's own reaſon and ſober judgment, that can alone lay a foundation for its* juſt eſteem, *and make a way for it into the heart. And this is the* only eſtabliſhment *of it, that is pleaſing to God, or of benefit to men. The* meer profeſſion, *without this, is worthy no chriſtian* man's, *or* miniſter's, *or* magiſtrate's *concern, either as a* lover *of God, or mankind. Yet this is all the religion ſuch meaſures are fitted to promote. And this is all they, who take them, if they are* wiſe men, *can be ſuppoſed to have in view. Not* religion *in truth, but the* name *and* profeſſion *of it; and perhaps the* honours *and* profits *in chriſtian countries annexed to it. The* diſhoneſt, unmeaning *profeſſion of chriſtianity, may ſerve the worldly ends and intereſts of* Chriſtian miniſters; *but* God *can have no* glory, *nor* Chriſtianity *any* credit, *from ſuch profeſſors; nor* themſelves *any* ſpiritual advantage *from ſuch profeſſion. So that if worldly ends be in view, it is rational to terrify men into a profeſſion of Chriſtianity: but if the* honour *of God, the* credit *of Chriſtianity, or the* ſpiritual good *of theſe men themſelves be aimed at, no meaſures can be more unfit for this purpoſe: unleſs theſe ends can be obtained by mens diſhoneſt profeſſion of that with their* mouths, *which they believe not in their* hearts; *and of which, in their lives, they ſhew perhaps an* open contempt: that is, *by what directly croſſes them.*

But *may not ſuch be ſilenced, to prevent* their doing miſchief? *What* miſchief? *Can they deſtroy the* evidences *for the religion of* Jeſus, *by their ſophiſms or drollery? Can they hinder the* rational conviction *of its truth, or the enlightenings of the* holy Spirit, *on any ſerious mind fitted to* receive the truth in the love of it, *or be formed into the chriſtian temper? They may poſſibly furniſh* ſome, *who hated it in their hearts, with* topics of raillery, *and prompt the merry triflers to diſcover that diſlike, which before was covered with the hypocritical profeſſion. This is all the* miſchief *they are likely to do. And is the religion of* Jeſus *diſhonoured hereby? Could it have any* credit *by ſuch profeſſors, or loſe any by their* renouncing

the profeſſion. A man *who duly values his* ſoul, *will not be laugh'd out of his religion. If he meets with* arguments *againſt it, himſelf is not able to anſwer, he will have recourſe to thoſe who can help him, and examine to the bottom, e'er he'll part with his religion. And as for thoſe who have no* ſuch value *for* theirs, *it matters little what religion they profeſs, or whether they make profeſſion of* any; *ſeeing in truth they have none at all, and an* honeſt heathen *is as good, if not a better* chriſtian, *than they.*

On *theſe accounts, I cannot applaud the* conduct *of thoſe who were concerned in Mr.* Woolſton's proſecution. *There are many ſure, who could have ſhewn the* weakneſs *of his reaſonings, and* rudeneſs *and* folly *of his* ridicule, *to the ſatisfaction of all men of ſober minds. Had it not been more* humane, *and more* honourable *to Chriſtianity?* He *plainly prides himſelf on this* proſecution, *and triumphs as if he had the better of* Chriſtianity, *and the* Biſhops. *And will have many more* admirers, *on this account, than ever he would have had for his ludicrous performances.*

Had *they been* wholly neglected, *one would think they ſhould have made no convert to* infidelity, *among any that ever underſtood their religion, or felt its* influence *on the* heart. *And for thoſe who* disbelieve *Chriſtianity in their hearts, and ſhew no* regard *to it in their* lives, *what does their profeſſing it* ſignify? *Were they not as good own this with their* mouths?

But *this* proſecution *makes the man* famous. *The* enemies *of Chriſtianity will naturally think him a* ſhrewd fellow, *and that his* arguments *muſt have great* force, *to bring upon him the* wrath *of the* biſhops, *and the* weight *of the* civil power. *And many out of* compaſſion *to a* ſufferer, *will look into his books, who perhaps had never elſe heard of him, or troubled their heads about his writings. And whilſt they read under the influence of this paſſion, and therefore with a* bias *in his* favour, *will think better of the* argument *and* cauſe, *than otherwiſe they had done. So that if it be any hurt to* chriſtianity, *to loſe ſuch profeſſors of it,* this *method ſeems very likely to further* ſuch damage. *And though the* fear of the power

may temper men's tongues, this is not the way to gain their hearts, *nor conciliate a reſpect for* chriſtianity, *or the* miniſters *who are ſaid to take ſuch* formidable, *and as* they *will call them,* injurious meaſures *to ſupport it.*

AND *it ſeems to me a natural and* unalienable *right of mankind, for every one to judge for himſelf, about all matters that concern himſelf; and therefore about* religion, *man's chief concern. And as* others *have this concern in common with him, if he has diſcovered (or thinks ſo) any* miſtakes, *which* himſelf *had made, and* others *ſtill make about* it, *why ſhould he not have liberty to ſet this before them, in a way that ſeems to him moſt likely to convince? Such* liberty *of* thought, *of* ſpeech, *of the* pen, *and* preſs, *ſeems to me a natural appendage of the* powers *of thinking, ſpeaking and writing, which God has given to men. And where it is* equally *and* impartially *allowed to all men, can never hurt truth. If one* argues, talks, *or* writes *againſt it, another may do the ſame for it; in which caſe, truth could never be loſt nor obſcured, but muſt be ſet in the clearer light, and the evidence for it made more* unqueſtionable, *as the* objections *againſt it would be made appear to be of* no force.

AND, *as has been hinted before, this muſt be the Caſe as to the* truth *of* Chriſtianity. *If it might have this* liberty, *it would quickly become the* religion of mankind, *were the* preachers *and* profeſſors *of it, animated with the ſame zeal for its propagation, as its firſt miniſters, and as* careful *to adorn it by their lives. How ſoon it ſpread its ſelf thro' the* Roman Empire, *chriſtians need not be told. And ſure, if all the* wiſdom *and* philoſophy, *all the* wit *and* eloquence *of old* Greece *and* Rome, *could not ſtand before it; If by its* internal excellency, *and* external evidence, *together with the zeal and integrity of its miniſters, and exemplary lives of its profeſſors, under the influence of the divine* Spirit, *it could make its way into men's hearts, and eſtabliſh itſelf in the world, and that in ſpite of* ſcience *and* argument, cavil *and* ſophiſtry, railing *and* calumny, wit *and* raillery, *and theſe confederated with perſecuting power; need any be in fear for it, from the attempts of* modern unbelievers? *Can*

they

they *argue more ſolidly, plead more forcibly againſt it, or play upon it with greater wit than the old* Greeks *and* Romans? *Is* Chriſtianity *grown leſs defenſible? Or have* they *a new reſource of arguments to batter it? If not, cannot chriſtians* now, *as well as* heretofore, *ſhew the weakneſs and ſophiſtry of them? And if they* have, *why ſhould they not be permitted to produce their ſtrong reaſons? Have chriſtians any* reaſon *to fear they are good, and will ruine the* evidence *of Chriſtianity? If this be the caſe, the ſupporting it by* power *may be needful; but why any reaſonable man ſhould be fond of it, or deſire to ſupport it, I cannot ſee, unleſs for the ſake of* worldly advantages, *accruing from it. If* not, *it will be an* honour *and* advantage *to it, and a* confirmation *of the* faith *of believers to ſee, upon re-examination, that the* evidences *for it are inconteſtable, notwithſtanding theſe new arguments produced againſt it.*

Q

But, "ſhall they be permitted without *reſtraint*, "or *penalty* to reproach it, and call it *impoſture, fooliſh, wicked* and *groſs* impoſture?" *Why, will calling Chriſtianity by* ill names, *and caſting* undeſerved *reproach upon it, really hurt it, or* ſeduce *any from it, who indeed believe it, and heartily embrace it? Is that* real *reproach, that is undeſerved? And if the religion of* Jeſus *deſerves not to be reproached, may not this be made appear? And where then will the* reproach *reſt, but on their licentious* tongues *or* pens, *their weak heads, or wicked hearts, who have thus abuſed it? If Chriſtianity be not* true, *it is* impoſture. Such, *unbelievers muſt think it. If* they *ſpeak this out, religion is no more hurt by their* ſaying *than* thinking *it. But if it be* true, *their thinking, or calling it* impoſture, *does not make it* ſuch. *And if they tack to this the moſt* diſgraceful epithets, *this may ſhew their enmity to religion, but it ſhews, at the ſame time, their* folly, *and perhaps* wickedneſs. *Nor can any men of ſenſe, who are friends to Chriſtianity, ever think the worſe of it, for that its enemies are* foul-mouth'd abuſers *of it? But themſelves muſt be thought the worſe of, for ſuch abuſe.*

BUT ſhould they be ſuffered to make it their *diverſion*, turn it into *ridicule*, and endeavour to expoſe it to common ſcorn? *Why, is the religion of* Jeſus ridiculous, *becauſe they laugh at it? Or are any, who are ever likely to credit this religion, to be laugh'd out of it? If it be not in* its ſelf *ridiculous, but* wiſe, venerable, divine, *they only render themſelves ridiculous, by ſo abſurd and monſtrous an* ineptitude: *'tis laughing at a* judge *inſtead of a* jack-pudding. Such *laughers muſt be the ſcorn of all the ſober world: and muſt look exceeding* weak, *or appear in a much* worſe light. *If a religion be* indeed *ridiculous, it deſerves to be laughed at: and the graveſt of men have thought it no* impropriety, *or* indecency, *to treat it in that manner.* Elijah *the* prophet *mocks* Baal, *and his* worſhip. *When his prieſts cry'd to him in vain to fire their ſacrifice, he thus ridicules them and him,* * Cry aloud, for he is a God; either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he is aſleep, and muſt be awaked. Such *a God deſerved to be mocked, and* worſhip *rendered to ſuch a God was a ridiculous abſurdity. But had* he, *after this mockery of* Elijah, *heard the cry of his prieſts, and fired their ſacrifice, who then had been ridiculous? Would not* Elijah *have been laughed at, for ſuch* miſplaced *mockery? And may not the* ludicrous mockers *at the religion of* Jeſus, *be thus rebuked and expoſed? By ſhewing how* unfit *a ſubject it is for ridicule? and making appear, that they laugh at what they do not underſtand, which is* groſs folly. *Or elſe that they are ſuch ridiculous creatures, that rather than check the merry humour, they will laugh at the moſt* grave, ſolemn *and* venerable *thing in the world, which is ſomewhat worſe.*

IF *herein they are guilty of* indecency *and* rudeneſs, *are they not the more likely to fail in their Deſign? Muſt not this diſguſt all who have a taſte of* decency *and* good manners? *And may it not be improved againſt them? And if to this they add bare-faced* calumny *and* ſlander, *and groſs* miſrepreſentation, *muſt not this, when it appears, do their cauſe diſſervice?* Such methods *of attacking it, muſt render the attack more void of force, and give*

* 1 Kings xviii. 27.

give chriſtians a great advantage *againſt them. And what harm is likely to enſue, if they take their* own *way, and propoſe their reaſons in a dreſs, moſt ſuitable to the reliſh of their own vain minds? May not the* friends of Chriſtianity *ſet it in a light, that ſhall make it triumph over* weak *reaſoning*, plain *ſophiſtry*, low *ridicule, and* baſe *and* groſs *miſrepreſentation? This muſt ſhame and ſilence ſuch oppoſers, or ſhew they are paſt* ſhame. *The* reproaches *levelled at Chriſtianity, will recoil on themſelves, and inſtead of making that be ſcorned, they will become the* ſcorn *and* averſion *of all the wiſe and good. Should chriſtians* ſeem *afraid in ſuch a conteſt, by calling out for help to the* civil powers? *But if they had no ſuch apprehenſions, it is* mean *in them to add the weight of* civil vengeance, *to all the* diſgrace *and* contempt *theſe men are bringing on themſelves.*

But "ſhould they be ſuffer'd, in ſo *ſaucy* a man-"ner, to affront the *eſtabliſhed religion* of a country, or "do it with impunity; that is, the religion ſet up and "ſupported by the *civil powers?*" *Does the eſtabliſhment of a religion by the* civil powers, *manifeſt the excellency of it in* its ſelf, *or add* any *to it? If it does, the* adverſaries *to Chriſtianity had an unanſwerable reaſon againſt it, on its firſt publication, both among* Jews *and* Heathens. *And the* Mahometan *and* Pagan *religion, in all ſuch countries, have, on this foot, the* advantage *of it ſtill: As has* Popery *in* Spain, France, *&c. againſt* Reformed Chriſtianity. *But is* Popery *the better for being eſtabliſhed in* France, *or* Mahometaniſm *in* Turkey? *Or the religion of* Confucius, *in* China? *&c. Or is it a* fit reaſon *for my believing any religion, that it is the religion profeſſed by the* rulers, *or taught by the* biſhops *or* preachers, *in my country, how wiſe or good ſoever I imagine them to be? No one, who has a due ſenſe of religion, will maintain this. And why then ſhould ſuch* eſtabliſhment *be pleaded in favour of* Chriſtianity? *If it be in* its ſelf *an abſurd and ridiculous religion, it was a* ridiculous *thing for magiſtrates to make it an* eſtabliſhment: *and it is yet* more *ridiculous for the maintenance of their* authority, *and credit of their* wiſdom, *to ſilence*

by

by their power thoſe who would ſet this in view. But if it be, as all chriſtians muſt believe it, a religion wiſe, well-founded, rational *and* indeed divine, *and it is no diſcredit to it, for* fooliſh, bold, proud, *and* raſh *men, to expoſe themſelves by vain endeavours to make it ridiculous, why ſhould* rulers *reckon their* honour *or* authority *endangered by ſuch vain attempts?*

WAS *it not the religion eſtabliſhed in his country, having the* ſanction *of the* royal command, *that* Elijah *ridiculed, in the paſſage above cited? Was not* Chriſtianity *at firſt publiſhed, in oppoſition to all the* religious eſtabliſhments *then in the world? And did not the ancient writers for it, endeavour to ſhew the abſurdity of the religions then eſtabliſhed amongſt the* Greeks, Romans, *and* other nations? that is, *in other words, how ridiculous they were? For that, and that only which is* abſurd *or* inept, *is the proper ſubject of ridicule. Let* Minucius, Arnobius, *and* Lactantius, *who all wrote before the empire became chriſtian, be conſulted. Might they take this liberty, with the religion then eſtabliſhed, and why may not* unbelievers *take the ſame liberty with Chriſtianity, when become an eſtabliſhment? Should the civil rulers* then, *have cruſhed by their power, the* writers *againſt the eſtabliſhed religion? Should not both* prieſts *and* rulers, *for their* own *ſakes, and for the* peoples *ſakes, have examined* themſelves, *and have put* them *on examining into the truth, and whether what* was *offered deſerved regard? Or, becauſe their religion was eſtabliſhed, muſt they take it* for granted, *it was true, and therefore never examine, but by dint of power deſtroy, or ſilence oppoſers? If this was* wrong *in them, is it* right *in chriſtian miniſters to call on the civil powers, to deſtroy or ſilence unbelievers now? Or muſt* Chriſtianity *have a privilege againſt all other religions, which none muſt be allowed againſt it? Is this* equitable *in its ſelf? Or is it for the* credit *of this religion that it only muſt never be re-examined?*

"BUT did the *Apoſtles* or ancient *defenders* of Chriſtianity, uſe *rudeneſs* and *railing* in their ſpeeches or writings? Did they treat the eſtabliſhed religion with *ſcoffs, inſults,* or *ill names?*" *Admit they did not,*

not, but used more meekneſs and gravity in their arguments, and talked with more caution, decency, and good manners. This was the more for the honour of religion, and no diſadvantage to their cauſe. One would be ſorry to ſee Chriſtians employing the ſame ill arts, or uſing the ſame ill manners, in defending their own religion, or attacking an adverſe one, as the enemies to it may in attacking theirs. If they fairly repreſented what they oppoſed, and talked of it as it deſerved, they did it no wrong. If they miſrepreſented it, this was but ſlandering it, and hurting their own cauſe. This could make no impreſſions to the diſadvantage of the religion they oppoſed. The ſame I ſay here. And had that been the caſe, civil puniſhments had been a much more improper method to ſilence them, than ſober refutation, at leaſt it had been much leſs humane.

I could wiſh therefore, Mr. W. had never been proſecuted for his diſcourſes; or that he might now be graciouſly pardoned, and that even my lords the biſhops, if they were concerned, as he ſays, in his proſecution, would be petitioners firſt, and put up all the indignities offered themſelves, for the honour of Chriſtianity. Let him go on in his own way. If he can demonſtrate the falſhood of Chriſtianity, chriſtians muſt get a better, or make the beſt of the religion of nature. If he cannot, as chriſtians muſt believe, let him, if ſuch be his liſt, uſe his endeavours: and if where his reaſons fail, he will miſrepreſent, calumniate, and crack a jeſt; this may make ſome mirth for fools, but cannot hurt Chriſtianity, nor impreſs any one ſoul to its diſadvantage, who is ever likely to be a real chriſtian, or a credit to the religion of Jeſus.

But, "can I plead for ſuch a man? an infidel; "a ſcoffing, drolling, inſulting infidel? Can I have any "compaſſion for one, who has done, and is likely to "do ſo much miſchief? Should not every chriſtian "deteſt the man, and rejoice to ſee him puniſhed?" I own I have no apprehenſions of any mighty miſchief he has done, or can do. And the worſe I think of the man, the more reaſon, upon chriſtian principles, I have to pity him; and mere humanity ſhould reſtrain from joy at his puniſhment.

ment. Did God himſelf take the matter into his own *hand, and by immediate infliction make him incapable of uſing either* tongue *or* pen, *it were* unchriſtian *to rejoice at his calamity. And to pity him, and pray for the reſtoration of both, would be much more becoming. Indeed, this might look like an* indication *from heaven, that both ſhould be lain under* future *reſtraint. And* under *theſe apprehenſions, none ſhould pray for their reſtoration, with liberty for like* abuſe. *But I ſee nothing in reaſon, or the religion of* Jeſus, *authorizing men to lay him under* ſuch reſtraint. *And whilſt I plead againſt this, I am not pleading for* him, *but for the honour of Chriſtianity, and of chriſtian* miniſters *and* rulers. *Let his* reaſonings *be refuted, and his* ridicule *expoſed. But let not his* perſon *be hurt, his* property *broken in upon, nor his* liberty *as a man, a reaſonable being, infringed.*

His proſecution, in my account, *is likely to do more miſchief than his* pamphlets. Theſe *may pleaſure ſome merry unbelievers, ſome* gay fellows, *who are at a looſe from all religion.* That *will ſhock ſerious doubters, and impreſs* ſome *who before had no doubts. It will be natural for thinking people to ask, and if they ſhould not,* himſelf *and his* favourers, *will be apt to ſuggeſt,* "What "are his arguments againſt Chriſtianity *ſo ſtrong*, that "he muſt be chained up by the *Civil Power*, and an "embargo laid upon his *pen?* And this in a nation "where it has the countenance of the *laws*, and ſo "many his *equals* in ſenſe and learning, are engaged "in *honour* and *intereſt*, in *duty* and *good policy*, to de-"fend it? If he can be anſwered, a *triumph* over him "at argument, one would think were enough. The "*man* would be hereby ſufficiently mortified, and the "*miſchief* he may do obviated. But to rout him at "*argument*, and ſhut him up in *jail*, and ſilence him "into the bargain, is *unmerciful*. Sure he muſt be a *for-*"*midable* adverſary, or he had never been thus ſer-"ved." *I plead for nothing, but that* he *and his* favourers, *may have no ſuch handle. For* him *I plead not.*

In *the following pages I have endeavoured to plead* againſt him, *and ſhew the* weakneſs *and* ſophiſtry *of his* reaſonings, *the impertinence of his* cavils, *the* meanneſs *of his jeſts, the* vanity *of his bluſter, and the* rudeneſs *and* ſcurrility *of his whole manner. I have paſſed nothing worth notice, in what he objects to the* letter *of the* evangelical ſtory. *And ſince himſelf lays ſo huge a ſtreſs on the ſedate* reaſonings *of his* Rabbi's letter, *as to defy my Lord of* London, *in this diſcourſe, to anſwer it, and that in a very indecent and inſolent manner; and in another of his pieces, as I am informed, to call on the* author *of the* trial of the witneſſes, *though in ſomewhat more* modeſt *a manner, to reply to his* Rabbi's *objections, as a* novelty *and* curioſity: *I have given them a thorough examination, and endeavoured to ſhew, that however* curious *and* novel *they are, they are meer* noiſe, *and little more than the* tautological repetition *of his own arguments, though put off in the name of a* Rabbi, *with improved* effrontery *and* inſolence.

I have given myſelf the liberty *to imitate him ſomewhat in his* manner, *not to ſuch a degree as to be* like him; *and yet enough, one would hope,* to make him leſs wiſe in his own conceit: *As* * Solomon *adviſes in a like caſe.*

If *he has any* ſerious doubts, *concerning any* paſſages *of the* evangelical ſtory, *I wiſh him at liberty to propoſe them to the publick, and doubt not but they will have a* fair *and* impartial *conſideration. But if he iſſues any more diſcourſes on theſe ſubjects, I wiſh, for his* own ſake, *and for the ſake of many* ſerious chriſtians, *who no more approve his* proſecution, *than the* writer *of theſe ſheets, he would treat a ſubject, for which they think they have* a deſerved veneration, *with more gravity and decency, that he would write with more* guard *on his* ludicrous diſpoſition, *and not mingle his* ſneers *at my* lords *the* biſhops, *and an* hireling prieſthood, *with his arguments againſt Chriſtianity, to which they add nor* weight *nor* ornament. *If there appears any thing to him* abſurd *in the religion of* Jeſus, *or the* belief *of it, let him ſet this in the beſt light he can, but let him forbear to interlard his diſ-*

 courſe

* Prov. xxvi. 4, 5.

courſe with trifling jeſts, ridiculous inſult *and* gaſconade, *and unmannerly* flirts *at his* ſuperiors. *If he would write with the* gravity *of a philoſopher, the* good manners *of a gentleman, and the* ſobriety *and* decency *of one of academical education, methinks I could dare promiſe, that my* lords *the* biſhops *would allow him liberty to write, and take care that his* arguments *be candidly conſidered, and that in a manner becoming* gentlemen *and* chriſtian divines. *And if he has any thing worthy a man in view in writing, one would think that for his own ſake, and the* credit *of his* cauſe, *he ſhould no more write in his* former manner.

I have no more to add by way of preface, *but only to requeſt, that if any* ſerious chriſtians, *into whoſe hands this may fall, meet with any thing in theſe papers, to their* own *ſatisfaction, and to the* credit *of their* religion, *they would, in their moſt* ſerious hours, *and moſt* ſolemn addreſſes *to the throne of grace, be* petitioners *for me, in my preſent melancholy and unhappy circumſtances, and make their* earneſt prayer, *in the name of* Jeſus, *whoſe religion is ſo much the ridicule of Mr.* Woolſton, *his* admirers, *and* diſciples.

REMARKS *on Mr.* WOOLSTON's FIFTH DISCOURSE, &c.

HE is pleased at once to open his design, in *examining*, as he calls it, *the three miracles of* Jesus, *in raising the dead*: This is, *to shew that the literal stories consist of improbabilities, incredibilities, and absurdities.* For what end? *In order to the* mystical interpretation *of them.* That is, no doubt, when his humour serves, to make himself and his friends as much diversion with the *mystery*, as he has now endeavoured to do with the *letter*.

HAVING opened his design, before he pursues it, he stops to observe, † *that it is uncertain from the* evangelical history, *whether* Jesus *raised more than these three persons from the dead.* And I must observe, that, if *he* may be the interpreter of it, it is as uncertain, whether *any one* of these was raised. But what need he concern himself what *divines* hold at present about it? since he can, it seems, ‖ assure *them, that whatever they hold,* (that is, that he *did*, or that he *did not*,) *the consequence would be neither better nor worse, than that they must espouse the* allegorical meaning, *or grant that* Jesus *literally raised* none *from the dead* at all. Whoever reads this discourse of his, will soon see he is a man of *much assurance.* But Christians need be in no pain for his *rhodomontade.* And if one may judge of what he *can* do, by what he here *has* done, he will never reduce *divines*

* P. 1, 2. † P. 2. ‖ P. 3.

to a neceſſity of *eſpouſing* allegorical meanings, *or granting that* Jeſus *raiſed none from the dead.*

To make out that the *literal ſtories* conſiſt of *abſurdities*, &c. he offers *ſix obſervations*, of which the *five firſt* have little to do with the *literal ſtory*; nor will, with all the weight he lays upon them, prove any *abſurdity* in it. They only prove, in his own account, *inaccuracy* in the relation; or, at moſt, that *Jeſus* wrought miracles, with too little *guard* and *caution*, to prevent the exceptions, that ſuch *ſelf-opinionated critics* might make to them. Which is a circumſtance in *their favour*, and ſhews that *he* performed, and his *evangeliſts* related, with all ſimplicity and plainneſs. And as neither had any deſign to *impoſe* on the world, in what was done and reported, neither were they ſo cautious and critically exact, as this writer would have had them. Such as fear detection, act and talk with caution: They who act openly, as occaſion offers, before friends and enemies, and relate events in a *plain, unaffected, artleſs* manner, without ſtudying to diſpoſe their materials to advantage, manifeſtly ſhew, they have no *ſuch fears.*

Obj: W. The Hiſtory inaccurate

B. Anſ. Then not crafty & deceitfull.

Obj: W. The 3 miracles not equall

B. Anſ: All are raiſing the dead.

BEFORE he proceeds to his obſervations, he tells us, (I ſuppoſe to add ſtrength to his firſt,) * *That it is viſible enough theſe three miracles are not* equally *great: That the greateſt of the three is that of* Lazarus's *reſurrection, becauſe his body is ſuppoſed to be putrified, and to ſtink; whereas* Jairus's *daughter was but juſt dead, and the* widow's ſon *carrying out to his burial.* But ſuppoſing the facts *real*, and the change made, at the word of *Jeſus*, by *power divine*; I ſee no room for this compariſon. All who are *truly* dead, are *equally* dead; and the calling them back into life, *equally* the act of Omnipotence. And, as he elſewhere obſerves, † *where* Divine Power *accompanies the voice, it matters not towards the effect, whether it be* a ſcream, *or a* whiſper: ſo where *Divine Power* produces the effect, *putrefaction*, or *non-putrefaction*, makes no difference. Death is the *entire*

* P. 4. † P. 40.

entire ceſſation of the vital functions *in the body.* Whether this be occaſioned, by the unaptneſs of the *fluids* to be driven about, or that of the *ſolids*, by reciprocal *tenſion* and *relaxation* to drive them, or *both*, the reſtoring one and all is eaſy to *Divine Power*. And if there be alſo a diſſolution of the *ſolids*, and an evaporation of the *fluids*, it is as eaſy to *Divine Power* to unite all again, as to reſtore the unbroken ſolids to their former *tone*, or ſtagnant fluids to their former *fluidity*, and recall them to the exerciſe of their ſeveral functions. So that, as he ſays in another caſe, *this way of talking is* * *adapting his argument to the capacities of the* vulgar, *who have no apprehenſions of God's power, out of ſenſible repreſentations of it.*

† THE *reſtoring a perſon indiſputably dead to life*, himſelf ſays, *is a ſtupendous miracle; and* two *or* three *ſuch well-circumſtanced, and credibly reported, are enough to conciliate the* belief *of mankind, that the* author *of them was a* divine agent, *and inveſted with the* power *of God*; as to *miſſion*, I ſuppoſe he means, as well as *operation*. Of what importance is it then, whether there be *degrees* in the miraculous operation or no, if every ſuch effect be in itſelf ſtupendous, and ſo proper an atteſtation? If theſe three miracles are well-circumſtanced, and credibly reported, it is enough, according to his own account, whether there be *degrees* in them or no?

§. I. *Mr.* Woolſton's Firſt Remark *conſidered.*

NO, ſays he, ‖ for the *chief, the moſt illuſtrious miracle is referred till laſt, which ſhould have been told firſt: told by* Matthew *and* Mark, *who could not be ignorant of it, nor forget it, had the ſtory been really true: and not by* John, ſixty years *after our Lord's aſcenſion. Here is too much room for* cavil *and queſtion, whether the whole be not his meer invention.* What room for *cavil* there may be, matters little: Mr. *W.* it is to be hoped, would not paſs upon the world as a *caviller* at Chri-

Obj. W. Why ye biggeſt not told firſt?

* P. 41. † P. 3. ‖ P. 6.

Chriſtianity; tho', according to the ‡ *critics*, the character but too well fits him.

But how does *John*'s telling this ſtory laſt, and *ſixty years after our Lord's aſcenſion, though* Matthew *and* Mark *knew it, nor could forget it,* and *yet report it not, give juſt ground to queſtion whether it were not his meer* invention? Why * *it was the deſign of all the evangeliſts,* eſpecially *the three firſt, to aggrandize their maſter's fame for a* miracle-worker. This is not a fair repreſentation; their manifeſt deſign was to give a conciſe and true account of the *birth, miniſtry, diſcourſes, preaching, parables, miracles, apprehenſion, trial, crucifixion, reſurrection,* and indeed *religion* of *Jeſus*. It was a neceſſary branch of this deſign, to give ſome account of his *miracles:* and if they were *true miracles,* this Author grants, (if he be in earneſt,) that they were *proper atteſtations* to his divine character. Nor could they have been omitted. And they muſt, it is true, aggrandize him, or make him *great*. But that they had any deſign to make him out of meaſure great, and either *multiply* or *magnify* his miracles, with this view, appears not. There is not the leaſt colour for it. And how conſiſtently, he here ſays, this was the deſign of the three firſt *eſpecially*, when he makes *John* invent a *thumping miracle*, becauſe *their's* were under ſize, I cannot ſee, perhaps he may.

W
Matt. Mark, and Luke, Would they not tell all ye miracles or the greatest.

B. Cong: 'Tis plain they did not tell all.

IT is not therefore *to* † *be preſumed,* as he ſays, *that* they *muſt make a report of* all, *or even the* greateſt Jeſus *wrought.*

‡ Cavillari, *ſays* Scaliger, eſt proprium *leguleiorum* & moratorum verbum; nam juriſconſultorum cavere. Cavillare non cavere legulejos dicebant, propter tricas & moroſas juris præſtigias. *Lawyers were ſaid* cavere, *when they anſwered ſuch as conſulted them. But* trickſters, wreſters of law, *who by arts and quirks uſed to delay juſtice, were ſaid* cavillari. *And in another ſenſe.* cavillatio eſt jocoſa calumniatio, *Feſt. cavilling is ſportive calumniating. Hence* Cicero, conſul autem ipſe *parvo* animo ac *pravo*, tantum cavillator, genere illo moroſo quod ſine dicacitate videtur, *ad Attic.* l. 1. *Epiſt.* 13. *May, and in another ſenſe ſtill,* Boerhius *calls the* ars σοφιστικὴ *of ſophiſtry,* cavillatoria. *And* Seneca, quid vocentur Latine σοφισματα a me quæſiſti——Aptiſſimum mihi videtur, quo Cicero uſus eſt verbum: *Cavillationes* vocat, quibus quiſque ſe tradidit, quæſtiunculas quidem vafras nectit: cæterum ad vitam nihil proficit. *Either character, that of a* Barretor, Calumniator, *or* Sophiſter *but too well ſuits him.*

* P. 7. † Ibid.

wrought. As to the *firſt*, it cannot be preſumed, unleſs by ſo *preſumptuous* a writer as he, becauſe it is over and over contradicted in their writings. They give an account of many miraculous cures wrought by him, beſides thoſe particularly related. *Matthew*, in the beginning of his goſpel, tells us, † *he went about* Galilee, *healing all manner of ſickneſs, that they brought him all ſick people taken with divers diſeaſes, and torments, and thoſe which were poſſeſſed with devils, and thoſe which were lunatick, and ſick of the palſey, and he healed them.* After he had healed the *Centurion*'s ſervant, and *Peter*'s wife's mother, ‖ *in the evening they brought him many ſick, and he healed them.* The like is ſaid when ‡ *John* ſent his diſciples to enquire *if he were Chriſt.* So when the ** *multitude followed him into the wilderneſs.* And when afterward he went over to the land of *Gennesareth*, †† *they ſent out into all the country round about, and brought unto him all that were diſeaſed, and beſought him that they might only touch the* hem *of his* garment; *and as many as touched him, were made* perfectly whole. After his coming down from the mountain, and chuſing his apoſtles †*, *great multitudes out of all* Judea *and* Jeruſalem, *and from the ſea-coaſts of* Tyre *and* Sidon, *came to hear him, and be healed of their diſeaſes—and ſought to touch him. And there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.*

AND though *raiſing the dead* was not ſo common, as other miraculous operations, yet, that it was not limited to theſe three, ſeems very likely to me, from *Jeſus*'s reply to *John*'s diſciples. For he tells them, that the *‖ *dead were raiſed*, as well as the *ſick healed, the blind made to ſee, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk*, bidding them go and *tell* John *what they had* ſeen *and* heard; that is, ſeen him *do*, and heard him *ſay*, not meerly what they had heard concerning him from *others*. However, there is no more room to ſuppoſe theſe three were all the dead *Jeſus* raiſed to life, than

† Matt. iv. 23. 24. ‖ Ch. viii. 16. Mark i. 32. Luke ii. 40.
‡ Ch. vii. 22. ** Ch. ix. 11. †† Matt. xiv. 25, 26. †* Luke vi. 12—20. *‖ Matt. xv. 5. Luke vii. 22.

than the * *five*, or at moſt *ſix*, upon record in the evangeliſts, were all the blind to whom he gave ſight. Nor is it to *be preſumed* theſe evangeliſts report *all* the miracles they knew *Jeſus* did, becauſe they tell us the *quite contrary*. Nor is it to be preſumed that *John*, who wrote laſt, has made up the complement, becauſe he tells us, *Jeſus* did a † multitude more than are recorded.

NOR is it to *be preſumed*, that theſe three have reported the greateſt miracles of *Jeſus*, of which they had knowledge. The foundation on which Mr. *W.* builds this preſumption being miſtake, *viz.* that to *aggrandize their maſter's fame for a* miracle-worker, *was in an eſpecial manner their deſign*. The account they give of his miracles, is but a neceſſary branch of their *general deſign*, which was not to give us a detail of all the circumſtances of *Jeſus's life*, *miniſtry*, *miracles*, &c. but only a ſummary account of what, under each head, they thought proper to be communicated to the world. It is not therefore to *be preſumed*, that the three firſt evangeliſts muſt have reported the *greateſt* miracles of *Jeſus*, of which they had knowledge, more than that they muſt have reported *all*. And tho' *another* evangeliſt makes report of a miracle, *greater* than they have mentioned, this carries in it no more *contrariety* to *ſenſe* and *reaſon* than *his* reporting ſome facts by *them* omitted. If ſuch *preſumption* will paſs with his *critics* for proof, and his *infidels* will judge upon ſuch evidence, I can lay little ſtreſs on the approbation or applauſe of the *one*, or judgment of the *other*.

BUT ‖ *critics*, it ſeems, *will not admit the belief of any ſtory in hiſtory told in ſo* diſorderly *a manner*; that is, when the *laſt hiſtorian* only tells the *greateſt* occurrence. Why ſo? *Becauſe the firſt writer of the life of an* hero, to be ſure, *makes mention of all the grand occurrences of it, and leaves no room for* biographers *afterward, but to enlarge and paraphraſe on what he has written, with ſome other circum-*

* Viz. *the two at coming out of* Jairus's *houſe*, Matt. ix. 27, 28. *The blind man brought to him at* Bethſaida, Mark 22—26. *The man born blind at* Jeruſalem, John ix. *and blind* Bartimæus *and his companion*, Mar. x. 46, Luke xviii. 35—43. † John xxi. 25.
‖ P. 7.

circumſtances and additions of leſs moment. If a third *or* fourth biographer, *ſhall* preſume *to add a more* illuſtrious tranſaction *of the hero's life, it will be rejected as* fable, *becauſe had it been* fact, *the* firſt *writer muſt have been apprized of it, and would have inſerted it.* For my part, I am not ſkilled in the *biography* of *heroes*, nor ſhall diſpute with him, whether *critics* eſtabliſh this as a rule to be obſerved by their *biographers*. *Matthew* and *Mark* were no ſuch biographers, I dare ſay, nor underſtood any of the rules of *criticiſm* to be obſerved, in drawing up the lives of *heroes*. *Heroes*, in my notion, hitherto, were fictitious perſons, and their tranſactions the buſineſs of *poets*, not *hiſtorians*. And the Evangeliſts were no writers of *romance*.

BUT if by *heroes* he means *great men* only, how will he prove, *that the firſt* writers *of their hiſtory make mention of all the grand occurrences of their heroes, and leave no room*, &c. I ſee none offered but his, *to be ſure*, which with me will never paſs for proof. It is true, if theſe *biographers* undertake to give *a true* and *full account* of ſuch great men's lives, either from their *own* perfect knowledge of *all tranſactions*, or from having all the *authentick records* or *reports* relating to the matter laid before them, and are men of probity and ſkill ſufficient for the work, there were ſome reaſon that *after-biographers*, who relate facts by them omitted, ſhould be diſtruſted. But where this is not the caſe, a *third* or *fourth* biographer may relate a fact omitted by thoſe who went before, and a more illuſtrious one, than they had reported, without being immediately deemed a *writer* of *fables*. And, if *he* be a writer of probity, may deſerve as much credit as *they*, notwithſtanding theſe additional occurrences. *Cornelius Nepos* and *Plutarch* were as eminent biographers, as moſt this writer has been acquainted with. They have written the lives of ſeveral of the ſame perſons. *Nepos* is the firſt *hiſtorian*. Will this writer now maintain, that if *Plutarch* has added *one* illuſtrious tranſaction, that *Nepos* has omitted, or *a more* illuſtrious than he has reported, that he muſt be a mere *romancer*, and *Nepos* alſo? *To*

be ſure. Why? *Becauſe, had it been fact,* Nepos *had been apprized of it, and would have inſerted it.* But, notwithſtanding his aſſurance, I ſay, *Plutarch* might have information of what *Nepos* was not apprized of; or might relate what *Nepos* did not think proper or needful to his purpoſe, and yet if he be an honeſt careful writer, deſerves *equal credit.*

And ſince neither *Matthew*, *Mark*, or *Luke* are profeſſed *biographers*, nor pretend to give a *perfect* account of all the occurrences, grand or not grand, of *Jeſus*'s life (however otherwiſe qualified, by *perſonal knowledge* of the facts, or *unqueſtionable teſtimony* of eye and ear-witneſſes) yet might *John* inſert, in his goſpel, facts, and *thoſe* illuſtrious ones, omitted by them, and notwithſtanding deſerve all credit, without impairing theirs. *Their* credit muſt reſt upon their character, and the opportunities they had, to know the truth of what they report. If their integrity is not to be ſuſpected, nor their advantages to know the truth to be doubted; what they all report deſerves all credit, *this circumſtance* notwithſtanding.

another Similar Caſe.

But † *what was the reaſon that the three firſt Evangeliſts, neglected to record this renowned miracle of* Lazarus? Suppoſe, that (without allowing it to proceed either from *ignorance* or *forgetfulneſs*) no ſpecial reaſon were now to be aſſigned, is this an argument that it was not fact? Muſt I be able to render a reaſon for *omiſſions* or *inſertions*, in ancient hiſtorians of ſeveral hundred years ſtanding, or pronounce them *romancers?* Where ſeveral facts of the ſame kind occur, may not *one* hiſtorian report what *another* has omitted, without impairing the credit of either? Suppoſe two *hiſtorians* now alive (one of which *now* compoſes the hiſtory of his times, and the other *twenty* or *thirty*, or even *ſixty* years hence) ſhould record the preſent *appearances* of *infidelity* amongſt us, and the *firſt* ſhould give an account of the writings of Mr. *Grounds* and Mr. *Scheme*, without any mention of Mr. *W*'s diſcourſes, and the *other* of the diſcourſes of Mr. *W.* without mentioning the writings

† P. 8.

writings of Mr. *Grounds*, &c. Suppoſe *each* thought the mention of one of theſe authors enough for his purpoſe; but *one* thought the writings of Mr. *Scheme*, &c. and the *other* the diſcourſes of Mr. *W.* moſt proper to be mentioned by him: Would not any man *preſume* too far hereafter, who would conclude both theſe hiſtorians to be writers of fables, for that the diſcourſes of Mr. *W.* were the moſt *renowned and illuſtrious* in their way, and had there been any ſuch writings, the *firſt* muſt have *been apprized of them*, and would *have inſerted* an account of them in his hiſtory. Would all the † *judicious critics in the world approve this reaſoning, and applaud the force of it?* Perhaps in the *world* of *infidels*, but all other *critics* muſt think ſuch a way of judging would deſtroy the *credit* of all *hiſtory*. We at preſent know theſe different relations to be fact. And if the *hiſtorians* appear, in all other reſpects, men of *truth* and *probity*, thoſe in future times have reaſon to believe their report of theſe facts, though they cannot account for the reaſons, by which they were determined to do this, in their hiſtory.

‖ SUPPOSE then that the *two firſt* Evangeliſts thought, with Mr. *W.* one *reſurrection-miracle ſufficient:* Which muſt they have choſen to report? To be ſure, *the greateſt, that of* Lazarus, *or the* widow's ſon, *if they knew of either. But when, inſtead of one of theſe, they tell us the ſtory of* Jairus's *daughter, an imperfect and diſputable miracle in compariſon of* them; *they muſt know nothing of them, or they would have preferred to make report of them.* For thus it ſeems * *wiſe and conſiderate hiſtorians always do.* If Mr. *W.*'s aſſurance may paſs for argument, to be ſure, he'll be too hard for chriſtians and their religion. It is but to *preſume*, that all *wiſe* and *conſiderate* hiſtorians will tell their ſtory, in that order, which to *him* and his *judicious critics* appears moſt proper, and then *preſume*, that *Matthew* and *Mark* are *ſuch* hiſtorians, and therefore muſt have told the *greateſt* tranſaction of the kind, had they known any *W.*

† P. 12. ‖ P. 9. * P. 9.

any thing of it; and this being the ſtory of *Lazarus*, muſt therefore be a new invention of *John*. Q. E. D.

B. BUT ſuppoſe *Matthew* and *Mark* were no ſuch conſiderate hiſtorians, but perſons who had never been inſtructed in the *art* of *biography*, had never been *fellows*, or ſo much as *ſtudents* in any college, to learn the *critical rules* of writing hiſtory: then, ſure, they might *tranſgreſs* theſe rules, and yet honeſtly tell the truth, though not according to art. And this was the known caſe. And where then is his conſequence?

OR ſuppoſe they were ſuch *wiſe* and *conſiderate* hiſtorians, who yet thought that in reſurrection-miracles there were no *degrees* of *compariſon*: That all *really* dead were *equally* dead, and not ſome *more*, and ſome *leſs*: That divine power only could reſtore ſuch, and all with *equal eaſe*, whether putrified or not putrified, whether whole or crumbled into duſt: That they knew the perſons raiſed by *Jeſus*, were all *perfectly* and *indiſputably* dead, and not *imperfectly* and *diſputably* ſo, whilſt *one* reſurrection miracle was enough they thought for them to report, which now ſhould they chuſe? Not the *greateſt*, not the *moſt perfect* and *indiſputable*. There is no room for ſuch choice. All with them are *equally* great, perfect and indiſputable. They muſt then be determined in their choice, by ſome other conſideration.

W. Obj: Why only Jairus's daughter told by Matth. B. Anſ: 1.

SUPPOSE regard had by them then to the *circumſtances* of the *perſon*. Mr. *W.* tells us, ‖ the raiſing a more public perſon was fitter than a more *private* and *obſcure* one. The Evangeliſts did not preſume to ſay what was fitteſt for their maſter to do. But in making report of what he did, they might, from ſome ſuch conſideration, prefer the telling of the reſurrection of *Jairus*'s daughter, he being a *ruler of a ſynagogue*, however inconſiderable a girl his child was. He alſo intimates that, ‡ *perhaps an enemy was a fitter perſon for* Jeſus *to raiſe, than* Lazarus *his friend*. Such himſelf tells us the *rulers* of *ſynagogues* * univerſally were. And the Evangeliſt tells us, few of the rulers †† *profeſſed faith*

‖ P. 25. ‡ P. 24. * P. 36. †† John xii. 42.

faith in Jeſus, that is, to own him for the *Chriſt*, and embrace his doctrine. Nor does it appear *Jairus* did, antecedently to the raiſing his daughter; but all other means failing, in the very article of death, applies to him for her cure. Now *Jairus* being a man of figure, one of that rank of men, who, in the *general*, had little reverence for *Jeſus*, and his application to him being therefore an uncommon event, they might reckon the revival of *his* daughter, more proper to be reported by *them*, than that of any other.

IT ſeems alſo to have been a more *public miracle* than that of *Lazarus*. For though there were more perſons at *Lazarus*'s grave, than were in the chamber, when *Jairus*'s daughter was raiſed; yet the *time*, and *concourſe* of people, and *condition* of the man, made this the more public miracle. It was in *the time* when *Jeſus* went about *Galilee*, preaching and healing, and *multitudes* followed him wherever he came. A multitude attended him to the ruler's houſe, and though they were not admitted, *many* had heard *Jairus*'s requeſt, *moſt* had heard the ſervant's meſſage concerning her death on the road, and had heard this confirmed by the pipers put out, and went away ſatisfied concerning both her *death* and *revival*,* ſo that *the fame of it ſpread into all that land*. *Lazarus*'s reſurrection was more *private*, whilſt *Jeſus* was in *the parts beyond* Jordan, withdrawn from the malice of the *Jews*, who ſought his life. Here, though he received all who came, both *friends* and *enemies*, he was not ſo crouded, as at the other ſeaſon. The meſſage brought him of *Lazarus*'s ſickneſs was † private. He goes to raiſe him without being ſent for. His *diſciples* knew nothing of the matter, till ‖ himſelf informed them. His coming was to the ſiſters unexpected. And though it is probable he brought ſome company along with him, ſome attending him wherever he came, nor could he paſs unobſerved; yet the purpoſe of his coming being *unknown*, it is not likely the croud was great; and though many of the ‡ *Jews* were there, to comfort the ſiſters, it does not ſeem to have

* Mat. ix. 26. † John xi. 3. ‖ Ver. 11, 14. ‡ Ver. 21, 32.

have been near ſo *public* an event, as the raiſing *Jairus*'s daughter. Now *Mark* is, in a manner, an epitomizer of *Matthew*; and *Matthew* a *Galilean*, might, on theſe accounts, chuſe to report the miracle done on *Jairus*'s daughter, in his own country, in a more public manner, and in the time of *Jeſus*'s more public miniſtry, rather than that on *Lazarus* at *Bethany*.

Ans: 3.

And indeed in conformity to their *general deſign*, which ſeems to be to give an account of the more *publick tranſactions* of *Jeſus*'s life, to which they do, in a manner, confine themſelves, paſſing over things of a more private nature, and ſuch as were antecedent to *John*'s impriſonment, which yet are reported by *John*: Such as his * turning water into wine at *Cana* in *Galilee*, and healing the nobleman's ſervant of *Capernaum*, which *John* † calls his ſecond miracle, his diſcourſe with the ‖ *Samaritan woman* and ‡ *Nicodemus*. It therefore better ſuited his purpoſe to relate the more private miracle of *Lazarus*'s reſurrection, as it did that of *Matthew* and *Mark*, the more public one of *Jairus*'s daughter. To which his love to *Jeſus*'s friend, as himſelf was his *beloved diſciple*, might contribute ſomewhat. So that here is a likely account, why this miracle might be related by *John*, though it was omitted by the other evangeliſts. Nor is it at all contrary to *ſenſe* or *reaſon* to believe it, though it comes in this order.

But the raiſing the *widow's ſon* at *Naïm* falls within the period of *Jeſus*'s publick miniſtry, and was more openly, and ſo far publickly done. †† *Why did not* Matthew *and* Mark *mention this ſtory, who muſt* more certainly *know it, if* true, *than* Luke *the Companion of* Paul, *who alone reports it?* So that it ſeems, it is not true, becauſe it has no other reporter. But why muſt *Matthew* and *Mark* know this fact *more certainly* than *Luke* the *companion of Paul?* *Matthew*, indeed, was very likely an eye-witneſs to both. And as far as knowledge upon *eye-ſight*, is more certain than knowledge upon

* Ch. ii. † Ch. iv. 46—54. ‖ Ch. iv. ‡ Ch. iii. †† P. 8.

upon *report*, may be ſaid more certainly to know of it. But why *Luke* might not as certainly know of it as *Mark*, appears not. The miracle was done in *Galilee*; † *Mark* was an inhabitant of *Jeruſalem*, and if there be any argument in *Luke*'s being the *companion* of *Paul*, ſuch was ‖ *Mark* of *Barnabas*.

BUT if *Luke* were not an *eye-witneſs*, he had opportunities enough to get certain information of the truth of what he reports. He aſſures us, he had been very * exact in his enquiries, and wrote, that *Theophilus* might *know the certainty of what he had been taught*. Is an honeſt, faithful hiſtorian, in ſuch circumſtances, not to be believed, becauſe former writers, on the ſame ſubject, have not given us the ſame relation, unleſs, at this diſtance of time, we can aſſign the particular reaſon of their omiſſion? Then every *firſt hiſtorian* muſt report every fact he knows, and all after-hiſtory muſt be a mere tranſcript, tranſpoſal, or paraphraſe of his, without the inſertion of new facts, he might be ſuppoſed to know; or blaſt the credit of the firſt hiſtory, and ruine its own, unleſs a man, many hundred years after, can aſſign the ſpecial certain reaſon of the omiſſion. This may be a rule in judging of facts among *infidels* perhaps. It is wonderfully fitted to make infidelity general, and ſpread it as wide as ancient hiſtory reaches. But what *Luke* reports, muſt with me, meet with credit, unleſs he can prove the things reported by him, *incredible* in themſelves, or produce *authentick* counter-teſtimonies that ſhall deſtroy their credit. When this is done, he'll make me ſo far an unbeliever, but not by talk that muſt deſtroy the credit of all hiſtory.

Q. Why John may be believed, tho Mat. & Mark omitted what he relates.

BUT *Grotius*, ſays he, tells us, Matthew *and* Mark *content themſelves with one inſtance of a miraculous reſurrection*, and aſſigns this as a reaſon of reporting no more, tho' they knew of them. And, *one ſuch*, himſelf ſays, *is ſufficient*: Why then might they not content themſelves with one ſuch? And this be a good reaſon why they mention no more? Why, ‡ *had they reported*

† Acts xii. 12. ‖ Ch. xv. 39. * Luk. i. 1—5. ‡ P. 8.

reported two or three more of the ſame ſort, no body would have thought their hiſtory of Chriſt, overcharged with impertinent *and* tautological *repetitions.* I am not ſure of this. Indeed with *tautological* repetitions, it could not, in this caſe, be overcharged: for two or three ſtories, tho' of the ſame ſort, needed not be told in the ſame words: but I am not ſure *one body*, whom he knows, would not have thought it over-charged with *impertinent* repetitions. I can't find but, as the matter now ſtands, the whole literal ſtory is, with this merry writer, *ſilly* and *impertinent*. None can be ſure, but more relations of the ſame kind, would, with him, have been *additional impertinence*. But ſuppoſe no one would have had ſuch a thought. What then? Therefore *Matthew* and *Mark* might not think one enough, or content themſelves with telling no more. The conſequence, I own, I cannot ſee. Nor why this may not be aſſigned, as a reaſon of their omiſſion.

BUT every body, one would think, ſhould ſuppoſe *Matthew* and *Mark* as fit to judge, what was proper and pertinent to the purpoſe of their hiſtory, and what to inſert or omit, as this gentleman, without loſing their *own* credit, or ruining the credit of *after-hiſtorians*, who may inſert ſome paſſages in *their* hiſtory, which *theſe*, though they knew, paſs over in ſilence. Himſelf tells us *, *if* Matthew *the* firſt *hiſtorian had recorded the ſtory of* Lazarus *only, whoſe reſurrection was the* greateſt *miracle; and* Luke *had added that of the* widow *of* Naïm's *ſon, and* John *laſtly had remembered us of* Jairus's *daughter, which the other evangeliſts, not thro'* ignorance *or* forgetfulneſs, *but* ſtudying brevity, *had omitted; then all had been well, and no objection had hence lain againſt the credit of any of theſe* miracles, *or the* authority *of the evangeliſts: But*—I own had this been the caſe, all had been well, nor had any objection, *&c.* but I cannot ſee, but as it is, it is even ſo, though what he would have had told *firſt*, happens to be told *laſt*. It is the credibility of the things reported in *themſelves*, and the care and faithfulneſs of the

* P. 9.

the *reporter*, on which the credit of the report muſt reſt, not the *order* in which they are reported: As to this, hiſtorians will uſe their own pleaſure. And it is very weak for any, in after times, to make this a reaſon for disbelieving the hiſtory: But to ſay it is utterly incredible, becauſe not told in the order they judge proper, is *wild* and *extravagant*.

BUT if the *ſtudy* of *brevity*, had *his* order been obſerved, might have been a reaſon for their omiſſion, without ſuppoſing it proceeded from *ignorance* or *forgetfulneſs*, why muſt it be ſuppoſed to proceed from *ignorance* in *them*, and be mere *invention* in *John*, becauſe the ſtories are told in another order? Why may not the *ſtudy* of *brevity* be ſuch a reaſon ſtill?

Brevity deſigned.

CERTAIN it is, the uſe to be made of their hiſtory, required both *plainneſs* and *brevity*. It was intended for perſons of all *ranks* and *capacities*. And writings deſigned for the uſe of all, muſt be upon a level, as much as may be, with the *meaneſt* among them. Plain, artleſs, brief narrations are manifeſtly moſt fit for this purpoſe. *Accuracy* in them had been loſt on the unlearned, and not ſo proper to inform them. A *multitude* of writings, had diſtracted the readers, and been unfit for the *buſy* and *labouring* part of mankind. *Great volumes* had been tireſome to all: and yet ſome *variety* would render the writings delightful. Hiſtories, on all theſe accounts, moſt fit, have the four *evangeliſts* given us. Such as, when brought into one volume, is not large, and yet contains a vaſt *variety* of matter, the *hiſtory* of *Jeſus's birth*, *miniſtry*, *journeyings*, *ſermons*, *parables*, *diſcourſes*, *miracles*, *apprehenſion*, *trial*, *crucifixion* and *reſurrection*, and a compendious account of his *religion*, beſides the *hiſtory* of *John*'s *miniſtry*. In this view, *all* muſt omit ſome things, and be ſhort in all they relate. This is the caſe, with regard to his *miracles*. Some they briefly tell, others they ſummarily report without being particular. *Matthew* and *Mark* the *firſt* writers, muſt and do omit many things they knew; though therefore they report but one reſurrection miracle, they knew of more.

Matthew certainly did. This is plain from the relation he gives of *Jeſus*'s * anſwer to *John*'s diſciples, the *dead are raiſed*, (in the plural) as well as the *deaf hear*, &c. If he had known of but one ſuch, and had thought his mentioning no more, would have given any juſt ſuſpicion, that this was the caſe; he would have corrected *this* anſwer, and not have made him aſſert, what his own narrative muſt contradict. Their *ſtudy* of *brevity*, fairly accounts therefore for theſe omiſſions.

And *chriſtians* do not conſider theſe *evangeliſts* as mere *private* hiſtorians, but under the eſpecial conduct of *God's ſpirit* in their writings. No one amongſt them was to give us the hiſtory *complete*. One goſpel had been then enough, and the reſt needleſs. The entire hiſtory was to be made out of all. Yet every one was to give us *a general* account of *Jeſus*'s miniſtry. For *this* reaſon, many of the ſame paſſages muſt occur in all. And yet for the *former* reaſon, they muſt be written with ſome variety. What one therefore *omits*, another *records*. Some were *eye-witneſſes*; all were informed of the facts they relate. All are perſons of equal and undoubted credit. Their narration is ſimple, plain and conciſe, yet *perſons* and *places* are often named in it. The very laſt writer had not outlived the *remembrance* of the events. Neither *Jews* nor *Gentiles* were ſo favourable to their cauſe, as to let groſs inventions and *fables* paſs for facts. If *this author*'s judgment may be taken, they had no cunning at deviſing fables. They were mere bunglers at it. They muſt then have been preſently detected, if they had not reported *facts*. And they were ſo thoroughly perſuaded of the truth themſelves, that they went about the world, renouncing their own *country*, *friends*, *relations*, to ſpread the ſtory, and perſuade men to believe it. All of them expoſed themſelves to *inſults*, *injuries*, *contempt* and *ſcorn*, and ventured their *lives* for it, and ſome chearfully laid them down. And they maintained it in the face of *ſenates*, *judicatories*, *rulers*, and the *whole world*, † *God alſo bearing witneſs to it, with ſigns*,

Some omitt wt others record & sometimes 2 or 3 record & same —

W.

B.

* Matt. xi. 5. νεκροι, as well as κωφοι, &c. † Heb. ii. 4.

ſigns, wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt. Is the *credit* of ſuch reporters to be called in queſtion, becauſe *one* relates, *one* part of the ſtory, and another *a different*, and not every one *all?* or do not happen to tell their ſtory in the order, Mr. *W*'s biographers would have told it in, but that which ſeemed good to *themſelves?*

YES ſays Mr. *W.** *this unnatural and prepoſterous order* of time *in which theſe miracles are recorded, adminiſters juſt ſuſpicion of the credibility of all theſe ſtories:* Why? *Becauſe the* greateſt *miracle is poſtponed to the laſt. To prove the ſtory of this miracle falſe and fabulous,* ſays this infidel, † *we need ſay no more than that it is laſt recorded. Had there been* any truth *in it, the firſt evangeliſt had remembered us of it.* Whether there be any thing in this talk, has been ſeen already. But to ſhew what an enemy this gentleman is to *tautological repetitions*, and how fitly he aſſumes the character of a *primitive believer*, the *allegoriſt* goes out, and the *infidel* enters, but not till he has paſt a compliment on himſelf.

‖ IT *is lucky*, ſays he, *for* Chriſtianity, *that* Jews *and* Infidels *have not hitherto hit upon the abſurdity of this prepoſterous narration.* Modeſt man! Had not all the *Infidels* of paſt ages, been men of more *ſhallow* reach, or leſs *lucky* imagination than himſelf, what had become of *Chriſtianity?* Has he not a right to laugh at *believers*, who, in his turn, can trample on all the paſt *champions* of infidelity, and make very *pigmies* of them. What bunglers at their buſineſs, were *Celſus*, and *Porphyry*, and *Julian*, that they could never diſcover this prepoſterous way of telling a ſtory, and ſo croſs to the method of all *heroical biographers?* Had there been no *ſuch* biography in their times? or were the *rules* of biography not then ſettled? or did theſe men *underſtand* nothing of them? that ſo groſs a tranſgreſſion ſhould eſcape their notice, and never be ſtumbled upon till the days of Mr. *W.*

* P. 10. † P. 11. ‖ P. 10. *ibid.*

BUT why ſo *lucky* for Chriſtianity was this overſight? Why, *otherwiſe they might have*— What? I wonder!—have *formed this cogent* objection *againſt theſe miracles*. Who could have thought all this parade, this *tantus hiatus*, was a preface to ſuch a ſpeech? I ſhould have expected *Chriſtianity* had received its death's wound, and was laid gaſping at his feet. But this *cogent objection*, what is it? Juſt what we have already had and conſidered, only uttered with more aſſurance *en infidel*.

HOWEVER, let him be heard out, that he may not pretend this *cogent objection* has been avoided *. Jeſus, *it is* manifeſt, *raiſed not the dead at all*. He ſets out, you ſee, in triumph. But how is this manifeſt? † *The only perſon chriſtians can* reaſonably *pretend* Jeſus *did raiſe*, *was* Jairus's *daughter*, *of whom* Matthew *writes*; *and ſhe*, according to the ſtory, *was only in a ſleep or ecſtaſy*. If I did not by this time know the man, I ſhould ſay, *it was manifeſt* this infidel never read *the ſtory*. Mr. *W.* comes over with this again hereafter, where it will be conſidered. But if this be fact, chriſtians can't *reaſonably* pretend *Jeſus* did raiſe even her. For *Matthew*, it ſeems, who tells us ſhe was raiſed from the dead, and that the fame of it went all over the country, tells us, at the *ſame time*, and in the *ſame place*, that ſhe was *not* dead, but *aſleep* only, at moſt in a *trance*, out of which Jeſus waked her, and that only with taking her by the hand, and calling to her with his *ordinary voice*. If *Matthew* be ſuch a *ſilly tale-teller*, we cannot *reaſonably* believe even him. But if this be miſrepreſentation, and *Matthew* tells us ſhe was dead, and chriſtians *then* and *now*, *reaſonably* believe it on *his* report, as an honeſt writer, and well apprized of the fact; on the ſame foot do they *as reaſonably* believe the reports of the *other evangeliſts*. But,

‖ THE Galileans, *after called* chriſtians, *finding their account in a reſurrection miracle*, viz. *this of* Jairus's *daughter*. What muſt he make of all the reſt of mankind, when theſe *ſtupid Galileans* could find their account,

* P. 10. † *Ibid.* ‖ *Ibid.*

count, in this inconſiſtent ſtory of the raiſing one from the dead, who was only aſleep. But what then? * *Luke, for the farther advantage of the cauſe, deviſed another ſtory of better* circumſtances, *in the* widow *of* Naïm's *ſon.* But why *deviſed?* Are we to take his word for this? Then we ſhall part with our religion at a very cheap rate. Or muſt it be deviſed, becauſe it is *better circumſtanced*, than that of *Jairus*'s daughter, that is a *bigger miracle*, for of ſuch circumſtance is he here talking. But may it not *be fact*, and not *fable*, this notwithſtanding? This ſingle circumſtance ſurely forbids it not. Does *Luke*, in his goſpel, diſcover any affectation to outdo *Matthew* and *Mark*, in his account of *Jeſus*'s miracles? Is there any ſhew of this? He *omits* ſeveral, mentioned by them. He mentions none they had omitted, but this, and that of the † *hydropic* healed on the ſabbath, in the *Phariſee's houſe.* Is this a better circumſtanced, *i. e.* bigger miracle of the kind, than any reported by *Matthew* and *Mark?* If not, is it not *preſumption*, and *ſtrong prejudice*, to make this ſingle circumſtance, that the *widow's ſon* was carrying out to his *burial*, when *Jairus*'s *daughter* only lay dead in the houſe, an argument, or ſhew of an argument, that this muſt be *Luke*'s device and invention?

BUT, *‖ *this being not ſo great a miracle as the church wanted*, John, *when no body was alive to contradict, or expoſtulate with him for it, trumps up a long ſtory of a thumping miracle, in* Jeſus's *raiſing* Lazarus, *who had not only been dead, but buried ſo long that he ſtunk again.* And ſumming up this argument in the next page, *the three hiſtorians viſibly ſtrive to* outſtretch *each other. The* firſt *is modeſt and ſparing in his* romance. *The* ſecond, *being ſenſible of the inſufficiency of the* former's *tale, deviſes a* miracle *of a* bigger ſize: *which ſtill not proving ſufficient for the end propoſed, the* third, *rather than his prophet's honour ſhould ſink, forges a ſtory of a* monſtrouſly huge one: Or, as Mr. *W.* has it elſewhere, *a ‖ moſt illuſtrious one, an ‡ huge, and ſuperlatively great one, ** a miracle of miracles.* W.

BUT

* P. 10. † Luk. xiv. *beg.* *‖ P. 10. ‖ P. 6. ‡ P. 7. ** *Ibid.*

BUT how comes the church to be *in want* of another miracle? the *Galileans* had found their account, it ſeems, in the *firſt*, that *miracle* and *no miracle*. And *Luke* had invented one *better circumſtanced*, which ſure muſt turn to more account. Why then ſtill *in want?* Another might do them farther ſervice indeed, but the want appears not. But taking his word for it, what then? Why John, *when no body was alive to contradict or expoſtulate with him for it:* How ſo? Mr. *W.* ſays *John* wrote * *ſixty years after our Lord's aſcenſion*; admit it, and ſixty years and a quarter, ſay, after this event. Was no body alive to contradict it now? Our bills of mortality mention ſometimes *two* or *three* of *ninety* and upwards, dying in one week, and many more of *eighty* and upwards; and it is reaſonable to think, that out of the city, more in proportion live to that age. Perſons of *eighty* muſt have been *twenty* at the time of this event; thoſe of *ninety*, *thirty*. It happened a little before the *Jewiſh* paſſover, at which all their males were obliged to attend. *John* tells us, *ſix days before the* paſſover, † *many Jews reſorted to* Bethany, *to ſee* Jeſus *and* Lazarus; and when *Jeſus* next day made his public entrance into *Jeruſalem*, ‖ *multitudes went out to meet him, for that they heard he had done this miracle.* *Jeruſalem* muſt now begin to fill, at leaſt, with *Jews* and *proſelytes*, to obſerve this feaſt. An event ſo timed, muſt have been known to the whole body of the *Jews*. And had it been *invention*, muſt, *ſixty years* after have been contradicted by ‡ *thouſands* ſtill alive, who from their

* P. 6. † John xii. 9. ‖ V. 18.

‡ *The bill of mortality from* December 9. 1729. *to* December 15. 1730. *amounts to* 26701, *of which* 779 *are above* 80, *about the* 35*th part of the whole. According to* this calculation, *if all the males of the* Jews *be counted but at* 1500000, *there muſt have been above* 40000 *living, who at the time of this event, or ſhortly after, muſt have been at* Jeruſalem, *and either ſeen or heard of* Jeſus's *public entry, and the circumſtances: And ſuppoſing half their males cut off in the enſuing wars, above* 20000. *And theſe being diſperſed, on the diſſolution of their ſtate, muſt give force to this conſideration:* A thouſand *who could contradict this invention, when diſperſed through the* Roman Empire, *and other adjoining countrys, being capable of doing the reporters more miſchief, than many* thouſands *pent up within the bounds of* Judea.

their *own* knowledge *could*, and from their *hatred* to the religion of Jeſus, *would* have done it. It muſt therefore have been plain honeſt fact, not to be contradicted.

BUT John *now trumps up a thumping miracle of* Lazarus's *reſurrection, who had been ſo long buried as to ſtink again.* It is the *thumpingneſs*, the *monſtrouſly huge* ſize of this miracle, that is the ſole foundation of his cloſe reaſoning, and pertinent banter on this head. *So that,* * *to prove this ſtory falſe and fabulous, no more needs be ſaid, but that it comes laſt,* for that it is ſo thumping an one. It need not be obſerved, that *John*, no where elſe, ſhews any deſign to heighten his maſter's character, by making report of *ſuperlative* miracles. † *Two* he reports mentioned by former evangeliſts: that of *Jeſus* walking on the ſea, and feeding *five thouſand* with *five barley loaves and two fiſhes.* Does he ſay any more of theſe, than they had done? If his purpoſe had been, in fabulous invention, to *outſtretch* former reporters, could he not have diminiſhed the number of loaves, and *multiplied* the number of eaters? *Four* miracles he reports, which the others had omitted; of which that of ‖ *turning water into wine* is perhaps the very leaſt of all *Jeſus*'s miracles. Thoſe of the ‡ *nobleman's ſon*, the ‖† *impotent man* at the foot of *Bethesda*, and the †† *blind man*, are no ſuch *ſuperlative* miracles, compared with thoſe the reſt report, why then ſhould he be ſuppoſed, in the ſingle hiſtory of *Lazarus*, to rack his invention for a *ſuperlatively* great reſurrection miracle? Is this *fact* or *fancy*, *reaſonable* ſuppoſition or *preſumption?*

B. John ſeems not to aim at bigger miracles y^n Matt, Mark & Luke.

AND if we attend to the *miracles themſelves*, there is no ſuch huge diſproportion in them, as he here affects to ſet forth. *Jairus*'s *daughter* is raiſed, indeed, not long after ſhe expired; the *widow's ſon*, as carrying out to his burial; and *Lazarus* after he had been buried four days, which according to the phraſeology of the *New Teſtament*, as *† himſelf obſerves, might be only *three nights* and *two days.* This is the plain, naked fact;

* P. 11. † John. vi. ‖ Ch. ii. ‡ Ch. iv. 46, &c.
‖† Ch. v. 1—10. †† Ch. ix. *† P. 30.

fact; is there any appearance that *Luke* or *John*, in theſe relations, ſtrained their inventions to make up the *deficiency* in *Matthew* and *Mark*, by a reſurrection miracle of a *bigger ſize*, even a monſtrouſly huge one? The raiſing the *ſecond* who hardly yet ſtank, could not, even in the *low conceptions* of the *vulgar*, appear a matter of much *greater difficulty*, than raiſing the *firſt*, ſuppoſing her dead. Nor that of *Lazarus* than this, upon the ſame ſuppoſition, though he began to putrify. *Three* or *four* days can make no ſuch change, in bodies ſo lately dead, as that the raiſing one ſhould, to any conception, *vulgar* or *unvulgar*, appear a *monſtrouſly huge* miracle, compared with the other.

If theſe be *fables* not *facts*, meer inventions on the inſufficiency of former tales, I ſhould eaſily believe, not only *John* but *Luke* too in his dotage. He was a *phyſician*, and ſo of liberal education. When *Matthew* now had told a tale of a reſurrection miracle that was *under ſize*, and *Luke* was to tell another *better circumſtanced*, that is, of *bigger* and *juſter* ſize, that he ſhould hit on no more lucky a one, than that of the *widow's ſon*, as inſignificant a boy, as ſhe was a girl, and dead but two or three days longer, muſt argue him a man of a very *poor invention*, a meer bungler at *romancing*.

How W. wd have invented miracles

But, ſay he was more upon his guard, and muſt not ſtretch too far, for fear of *contradiction*, that *John*, who was to outdo *Luke* by a *miracle* of *miracles*, ſhould only tell us the ſtory of *Lazarus*, not above four days longer dead than the *widow's ſon*, proves him a dotard, as to *ſtory telling* indeed. His invention was ſurely paſt age, perfectly *effete*, or he might have told us, ſince *no ſoul alive could contradict him, the* Jewiſh *ſtate was diſſolved, and all their records deſtroyed*, (as his * rabbi has it) of one raiſed, who had been dead *forty years*, whoſe very *bones*, as well as *fleſh*, were crumbled to duſt, and this an *uſeful magiſtrate* too, and have brought together, not only the *magiſtrates of a town*, but the whole *Jewiſh ſanhedrim*, nay the *whole body* of their *males*, at one of their three feaſts,

* P. 53. Luke viii.

feaſts, and have had the feat done in the view *of them all.* How much more *ſuperlative* a miracle had we had, if *John*'s withered, decrepit invention had been aſſiſted in his *biography*, by the facetious Mr. *W.*?

No, it is manifeſt theſe relations are of *plain facts*, where invention had nothing to do. Things are told as they were, without conſidering whether the miracles were *greater* or *leſs*, or which, for its ſize, ſhould go *firſt*; nay *Luke*, as if on purpoſe to confute this ſuggeſtion of Mr. *W.* and his *Infidel* and *Rabbi*, tells *Matthew*'s ſtory over again, and that in the very † *next chapter*, after he had invented that of the *widow's ſon*, becauſe the former was under ſize. Had he herein ſtrained his invention to the uttermoſt, that when he had a mind to tell two reſurrection ſtories, he ſhould come over again with *Matthew*'s diminutive one of the raiſing *Jairus*'s *daughter?* Mr. *W.* and his *infidel*, *it is manifeſt*, were not in the ſecret. And this dead-doing argument, which had ſcaped all infidels, till the ſagacious Mr. *W.* is as harmleſs as a potgun. I cannot but think he would have invented a miracle more to his purpoſe, had that indeed been his purpoſe, which Mr. *W.* and his *infidel* ſuggeſt, and not have told us the ſtory of *Matthew* over again, which he apprehended under-ſize.

B. But Luke & John had not this deſign — but merely to record facts.

But that Mr. *W.* ſhould make ſuch a flouriſh with this *cogent objection*, is ſomewhat unnatural, if any thing could be monſtrous in ſuch a writer. If there be any thing in a ‖† *future remark* of his, this *monſtrouſly huge miracle* is no miracle at all. It has hardly the appearance of one. Lazarus *had not been long enough buried, to put it out of doubt that he was dead* *. Theſe *three* miracles, if he is to be believed, are queſtionable, and differ no more than ‖ *one in a ſwoon*, one ‡ *carried out to burial before he is dead*, and ** *one voluntarily ſhut up in a cave, as long as he might live there without food.* Nay the *two laſt* may differ no more, than one *conſenting to be carried out as a dead man though alive*, and another *conſenting to be interred alive in a cave, either*

W. ag: W. The Climax reverſd upō himſelf.

† P. 53. Luke viii. ‖† Rem. 4. * P. 26. ‖ P. 27. ‡ P. 28. ** P. 29.

with food, or as long as he could live faſting. Is it not monſtrouſly probable now, that theſe two laſt *reſurrection miracles* ſhould be invented, becauſe the *firſt* was under ſize; when they differ ſo little, and neither appears a real miracle at all? and this *ſuperlative* one, is, in his account, the very leaſt of the three. The *girl* he allows might be in a *trance* or *fit*. The *widow's ſon* might be in a *lethargy*, and taken for dead. But *Lazarus* was only ſhut up in a cave alive. Or taking it in his † *other turn*, the *two* ſupplemental miracles are inferior to the *firſt*, being only tricks of perſons alive, meer *counterfeits*; whereas the firſt had ſome ſuch appearance.

W. How weak were Luke & John!

Mr. *W.* has given full conviction by this contradictory tattle, that nor *Luke* nor *John* underſtood the *biography* of *heroes*. They had very heavy heads for fable. What not be able to frame *one* ſtory, of an *unqueſtionable* reſurrection miracle? When there were more trials of skill than one, to invent a *greater* than the *firſt*, and then one *monſtrouſly greater* than that; and yet after all hammer out nothing that appears like *undoubted* miracle? Such dull fellows might poſſibly tell a tale, of what themſelves had *ſeen*, or *heard* reported by others; but doubtleſs never took pen in hand to write down their *own inventions*. Or if they had ſo little ſenſe as to commit them to writing, ſuch *dull, ſenſeleſs fable*, one would think, ſhould have made them as much the *common jeſt* of mankind, as they are now of the ſmart and ludicrous Mr. *W.* But that ſuch fable ſhould make its way into the world, againſt all the wit and learning of old *Greece* and *Rome*, and that favoured by the powers of the world, and ſettle itſelf not only throughout *Judea*, and the *Eaſt*, but the whole *Roman* Empire, and be received as undoubted fact by ſuch multitudes of all ranks; is, in his *Rabbi*'s language, *improbable, incredible* and *impoſſible*. Mr. *W.* therefore is miſtaken in making theſe reſurrection miracles *fable*, or he is very weak in endeavouring afterward to make them *no miracles*, or he muſt make *ſots* and *fools* of all mankind,

B But if ſuch weak writers ſhould perſuade the World to believe their Stories is — more ſtrange.

* P. 28.

mankind, that could not ſee through the forgery, and ſet ſuch *heavy*, *ſenſeleſs*, *barefaced* impoſture, in the view of the world, and cruſh it in its *riſe*.

WHEN he therefore ſays, ‖ *That had three* hiſtorians *of* Mahomet *reported theſe miracles of him, in this diſorder of time, you* chriſtians *would have argued againſt them in juſt the ſame manner*, (I thought this argument had ſcaped the ſagacity of all paſt *infidels*, till Mr. *W.* how ſhould it ever enter into *chriſtians* heads!) *and concluded them forgery and impoſture! And there is not a* judicious critic *in the* univerſe, *but would approve the argument, and applaud the force of it*; is only a ſpecimen of the man's *conſummate modeſty*. Indeed on the firſt ſtarting it, ſome chriſtians might poſſibly be pleaſed with it. There is a *biaſs* in all men towards their own party, a *partiality* to themſelves, and *prejudice* againſt oppoſers, which may make ſophiſtry appear like ſound reaſoning, till it is ſeen through. But does he think, that, if *Mahometans* had the ſame good opinion, upon as good grounds, of theſe *hiſtorians*, as chriſtians have of the *evangeliſts*, that one man of ſenſe among them would, upon this *ſingle circumſtance*, believe the report forgery? Is there one *Arabian critic*, (and many amongſt them have in times paſt been very judicious writers) that will *approve the argument*, or *applaud the force of it?* Not one, I dare ſay, any more than *chriſtians* do, as he uſes it. The *judicious critics*, in the *univerſe* of *infidels* may, perhaps, approve and applaud it. But if they do, it is not from their *deep judgment*, but their *biaſs* in favour of their party, as, from what has been ſaid, abundantly appears.

HIS talk of *Clemens*'s * *incredible ſtory of the reſurrection of a* phœnix, is at beſt a piece of *trifling impertinence*, and what has nothing to do with his argument. Does *Clemens*'s ſtory of the *phœnix*, ſtand upon the ſame foot with the reſurrection ſtories in the goſpel? Does he report this ſtory from his own knowledge, or as what he had heard from eye-witneſſes? If he gave into the belief of a ſtory, ſo commonly believed in his

‖ P. 11, 12. * P. 12.

time, though ſince known to be falſe, is that any argument that the *evangeliſts* tell falſe ſtories, of which themſelves and thouſands beſides were eye-witneſſes, or which they had from the faithful report of others? If Mr. *W.* produces this as argument, it proves nothing but his *unmeaſurable confidence.* If not, it is *ridiculous impertinence.*

§. II. *Mr.* W's Second Remark *conſidered.*

A Second remark Mr. *W.* makes, to ſhew the abſurdity, *&c.* of the literal ſtory of theſe miracles, is, W. ‖ *That we hear nothing more of theſe raiſed perſons, in the evangelical or eccleſiaſtical ſtory, neither how long they lived, nor of what uſe they were in the world.* What then? *Is not this enough to make us ſuſpect* (I hope all the ſuſpicions of *infidels* are not arguments) *their ſtories to be meer romance or parable? We muſt have heard ſomewhat of their ſtation and converſation in the world, had they been indeed raiſed.* Is this argument now or *preſumption*, given out with *daring confidence?* What has their after-life to do with the miracle of their reſurrection? Might they not be raiſed, for the preſent proof of *Jeſus*'s divine power and miſſion, though no more is ſaid of them in his hiſtory?

We hear nothing of us: we know 3 persons were or us. Seeing they did.

But, ſays he, † *Epiphanius found it among the traditions, that* Lazarus *lived thirty years afterward: That in reaſon and gratitude to* Jeſus *his benefactor, he ſhould have ſpent his time to his honour, in the ſervice of the church, and propagation of the goſpel. Had it been ſo employed, hiſtory*, ſurely, *would have informed us of it. But hereof it ſays nothing.* What then? Perhaps there was no more in *Epiphanius*'s traditional ſtory of *Lazarus*, than in *Clemens*'s of the *phœnix.* Or poſſibly he did not thus ſpend his time: What then? therefore he was not raiſed. Is this *argument* or *preſumption* again? Muſt *Jeſus* heal none, raiſe none, but ſuch as proved grateful for the favour, and careful to make *fit returns?* Was it no miracle without this? If it were, is

B. ans. 1.

‖ P. 15. † P. 16.

is it now any reaſon to disbelieve the *miracle*, becauſe we have no *report* of ſuch returns? It is plain from the hiſtory ſome were ungrateful. Of the * *ten lepers cleanſed* at once, only *one returned to thank* Jeſus, *and he a* Samaritan. Or is it to be thought, that all the multitudes healed by him, were duly concerned for his honour, and the propagation of the goſpel, becauſe they were in *reaſon* and *gratitude* bound to do it? Do men then *always* act, as in reaſon and gratitude bound? I doubt Mr. *W.* is not at preſent acting this *reaſonable* and *grateful* part, how much ſoever he † *abhors the thought that* Jeſus's *favours ſhould be loſt on undeſerving perſons.* This ſurely does not leſſen the favour: *God makes his ſun to ſhine and his rain to fall on the good and evil, juſt and unjuſt.* And what abſurdity is there in ſuppoſing, that *Jeſus*, in diſpenſing his favours, ſhould reſemble his *heavenly Father?*

BUT ſuppoſe all three, *Lazarus*, *the widow's ſon*, and *Jairus's daughter* (of which two we meet with nothing among the traditions) were grateful, and did what *in reaſon* they ought. What then? Muſt *apoſtolical men* neglect their proper and more important buſineſs, to write *memoirs* of *private* perſons lives. For what end? That they might hereby procure the belief, that ſuch were healed and raiſed. Was this any way needful? It ſeems ſo. Why? This † *ſilence about them, makes the miracles queſtionable, and like Gulliverian tales of perſons and things, that, out of the romance, never had a being.* Is not this a very decent compariſon, and at the ſame time exceeding juſt? The *goſpel* that gives a particular account of the life of *Jeſus*, the place and time of his birth, *viz.* the country of *Judea* and town of *Bethlehem*, in the reign of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, when *Cyrenius* or *Quirinius* was governor of *Syria*, &c. and as particular an account of the places and times of his public miniſtry, and death; is this an hiſtory like *a Gulliverian tale*, *of* perſons *and* things *that no where exiſt out of the romance?* Or becauſe the names and places of abode of all healed by *Jeſus*, appear not on record, is the

* Luke xvii. 17, 18. † P. 17.

the hiſtory of their healing a *Gulliverian* inſertion? Or becauſe we meet not with an after-account in hiſtory, of them whoſe names are there mentioned and places of abode too, are theſe *Gulliverian* tales? If *Cæſar* in his *Commentaries* mentions any heads of countries in *Gaul* or *Britain*, of whom we read nothing in after-hiſtory, does this argue that his account muſt be a *Gulliverian tale?* What ruin would this make in the credit of hiſtory? But if the hiſtory of theſe miracles, is not to be believed, on the credit of the *Evangeliſts*, on what muſt the credit of theſe corroborating relations depend? Has not Mr. *W.* as much right to call theſe after-reports *Gulliverian tales*, as the former. And will the telling a *dozen Gulliverian tales* eſtabliſh the credit of that hiſtory, which deſerves none, if it reports but one?

ans. 2.

BUT * *one would have expected that* Lazarus *and the* widow's ſon, *ſhould have been eminent miniſters of the goſpel.* Admit this reaſonable. How knows he that they were not? † *Becauſe* eccleſiaſtical *hiſtory has made no ſuch report.* But was there no eminent miniſter, of whoſe life and labours we have no account in this hiſtory? Himſelf owns, *the* ‖ eccleſiaſtical hiſtory *of the* apoſtolical *age is very ſcanty.* The *evangelical* ſtory gives no account at all of many of the *Apoſtles* labours. Muſt it hence be concluded they did no ſervice for the church, or propagating the goſpel? I doubt not but the *ſeventy* were all *eminent miniſters*, yet eccleſiaſtical ſtory has hardly preſerved their *names*, and hardly gives any account of their labours.

BUT, ‡ *In the wiſdom of providence, one would think, more remembrance ſhould have been left of one or all theſe perſons.* Why? *Becauſe ſuch a remembrance of them would new-a-days no leſs gain the belief of theſe miracles, than this* ſilence *tend to the diſcredit of them.* I am not ſure of this. This *ſilence*, it ſeems, *tends to their* diſcredit, with Mr. *W.* I queſtion whether he would have been gained to their *belief*, by ſuch remembrance. He would have hit off, by his lucky invention, *abſurdities* in theſe *literal ſtories*, as well as in that

* P. 17. † Ibid. ‖ P. 18. ‡ Ibid.

that of the *goſpel*. The *wiſdom of providence* ſeems no way concerned to gain ſuch perſons belief of the *miracle*, by *after-reports* of this kind. The credit of the *miracle* is already ſufficiently ſecured. This muſt reſt on the *veracity* of the reporter, and the *evidence* we have for it. If *after-memoirs* are not written by perſons of *equal* veracity, or of whoſe veracity we have not *equal* evidence, how ſhould they ſtrengthen our belief of the miracle? Could not Mr. *W.* tell us theſe were *Gulliverian tales*, freſh romances to ſupport the credit of the former? And how was the *wiſdom* of *providence* concerned to humour ſuch unbelievers? *Divine wiſdom* has made no proviſion of this ſort, nor ſhewn ſuch concern to gain their belief. It has taken care that the miracles ſhould have evidence ſufficient to ſatisfy all *reaſonable* men. And for thoſe who are not, it is content to leave them to themſelves, and ſhews a becoming neglect of them herein.

HAD Mr. *W.* any leavings of ſhame in him, I would here put him in mind of his groſs abuſe of *Grotius*, even according to his *own* citation, when he makes him opine that * *for the reſt of his life* Lazarus *skulked about for fear of the* Jews; and this for the ſake of ſome low banter. Whereas *Grotius*, who is giving a reaſon why *Matthew* and *Mark* might omit the ſtory of *Lazarus*, ſays no more nor leſs than this, *that* † *when* they *wrote*, Lazarus *was ſtill living, and there might ariſe danger to him from the* Jews, *were his ſtory publiſhed, as they did lay ſnares for him on the reſort to him and* Jeſus *after his reſurrection*. Not one word is dropt by *Grotius*, of his *skulking about the country, or abſconding*. Can any writer, uſing ſuch baſe arts, or rather indeed that is ſo *barefaced a falſifier*, be a credit to any cauſe? Ans. 3.

BUT why muſt *it have been expected* Lazarus *and the* widow's ſon *ſhould have been eminent miniſters?* Perhaps their living privately at home, might have been as much Ans. 4.

* P. 16.

† Mihi hoc ſuccurrit: cum illi ſcriberent vixiſſe Lazarum, ac periculum ei fuiſſe a Judæis, ſi quod illi acciderat palam vulgaretur. Nam etiam ut mox narratur c. xii. 10. ob hoc ipſum ſtructas ei inſidias. p. 14.

much for the honour and ſervice of Chriſtianity. Whilſt one lived at *Bethany* and the other at *Naïm*, ſuch as doubted of the truth of the Apoſtles report, might have repaired or ſent thither, and known whether ſuch perſons were living there, and had been raiſed from the dead. They were upon the ſpot, to confirm the *truth*, or confront *falſe reports*. But if *no ſuch* perſons were there to be found, would not this at once have ruined the credit of the miracle, with ſuch ſagacious unbelievers as Mr. *W?*

And was he to be conſulted, who were moſt fit to make miniſters of the goſpel? Might not divine wiſdom think *theſe* perſons fit to be raiſed, and yet *others* more fit to be made miniſters? Were not *others* as fit at leaſt, if not more fit, to be made reporters of their reſurrection than *themſelves*? Or who was to judge what was fit for him to do, *Jeſus* or Mr. *W. divine wiſdom*, or *his* wiſdom?

And does he not, in his very *next* * *remark*, tell us, Jeſus *ſhould have raiſed perſons of more importance than theſe.* ‖ *An* uſeful *magiſtrate*, *an* induſtrious *merchant*, *the* head *of a family*. Why? *becauſe theſe were of more conſequence to the public*; where they abode, he muſt mean. Had this been done, would Mr. *W.* have expected that theſe too, ſhould have been *eminent miniſters of the goſpel?* ſuch expectations had been founded on the ſame, *or even better* reaſons. Should not theſe have been equally *grateful*, and *concern'd* for *Jeſus*'s honour? Should not Mr. *W.* have as much *abhorred the thought, that ſuch a favour ſhould have been loſt on perſons undeſerving?* Would not ſuch worthy perſons have been *as* proper, if not *more* ſo for the office, as the *obſcure* Lazarus, *&c.*

But had they been ſuch miniſters, they would have been as *improperly* raiſed, as thoſe *Jeſus* did raiſe. They had been of no more conſequence to the public. They would not have gained *Jeſus* love, therefore, *as a benefactor to mankind.* They muſt have quitted their *uſeful ſtations*, and gone about ſpreading the goſpel. And where then had been the credit of the miracle?

* P. 23. ‖ P. 24.

But

BUT if *they* might have ſtaid at home, without impairing the credit of the miracle, or being ungrateful, though they became not *miniſters*, ſo might *theſe*. But perhaps had *Jeſus* raiſed ſuch as Mr. *W.* thinks *proper*, he would not have expected their being *eminent miniſters*; but ſince he raiſed ſuch as *he* deems *improper*, he has loſt all his credit with him, for not making them miniſters, and taking care that the *hiſtory* of their miniſtry ſhould be recorded. And I will venture to ſay, *Jeſus* and his religion would have had little *credit* from him, had he been humoured ſo far as to be made his diſciple, even in his *own way*.

§. III. *Mr.* W's Third Remark *conſidered.*

A *Third remark* of Mr. *W.* is, *that theſe three perſons were improper ones to have been raiſed by him, nay*, according to the letter, ‖ *almoſt the impropereſt that he could have exerciſed his power upon. It was not indeed neceſſary, he ſhould raiſe all that died wherever he came.* Two *or* three *inſtances of his almighty power in this kind, will* be allowed, it ſeems, *ſufficient. But out of the great numbers that died during his miniſtry, he ſhould wiſely and judiciouſly have choſen out the moſt fit.* Two or three ſuch inſtances we have, enough even by his allowance. But the ſtory of their reſurrection is *incredible.* Why? Becauſe Jeſus *has not made a* wiſe *and* judicious choice *of the* ſubjects *of his reviving power.* Why? *Theſe were not the* moſt fit *for him to exerciſe this power upon.* But ſuppoſing them not the *moſt fit*, yet if they were *fit ſubjects*, how does this impair the credit of the miracle. Suppoſe Mr. *W.* had been preſent when *Lazarus* was raiſed, and had thought it more proper for *Jeſus*, to have raiſed one of the † *civil magiſtrates* of *Bethany*, who had been longer dead, would he not therefore have believed his own *eyes?* If he would, why ſhould he not believe the miracle now, on the report of an *honeſt eye-witneſs?* If not, he is an *incurable* unbeliever.

W. The perſons were too mean & improper —

B.

‖ P. 20. † *Rabbi's* Lett. p. 51.

BUT why may not a *divine meſſenger*, veſted with divine powers, be a judge *himſelf* who are the *moſt proper* ſubjects on whom to diſplay his reviving powers? Or muſt his judgment be conformable to Mr. *W*'s? Suppoſe he ſhould judge thoſe very proper, perhaps *moſt* ſo, which Mr. *W*. and ſuch wiſe men as he, ſo very wiſe in their *own conceits*, think *leſs* proper, or downright *improper?* What then? Then, it ſeems, they will not believe the *miracle*. Then they muſt e'en let it alone. Muſt *Jeſus* pleaſe their *unaccountable* humour, or elſe be look'd on as a *juggler?* Is not the conſequence unavoidable?

W. *Why Jairus's daughter an improper perſon.*

AND why are theſe ſo very *improper?* why, * *Jairus*'s daughter *was an inſignificant girl of but twelve years old.* Be it ſo, her reſurrection was as ſignificant, as plain a proof of *Jeſus*'s divine power, and atteſtation to his miſſion, as if ſhe had been a *woman* of *thirty*. And this was the main end of *Jeſus*'s working miracles.

BUT ſays he,‖ *there could be no reaſon for raiſing her, but to wipe tears from the eyes and ſorrow from the hearts of her ſorrowful parents, who ſhould have been better philoſophers, than to have immoderately grieved for her.* I will ſuppoſe he means, beſides the forementioned diſplay and atteſtation; and that by *no reaſon* he means no reaſon for ſuch diſplay of *&c.* on her, but this. And what if *Jeſus* out of compaſſion to the ſorrowful parents, was influenced to take this occaſion of diſplaying his powers, was it not an inſtance of his great *tenderneſs* and *humanity?* Or would it have been more becoming the character of a *worker* of *miracles*, to have appeared deſtitute of all ſuch things? Yes, *for the parents ſhould have been better philoſophers, than to have immoderately grieved for her death.* Allow it, men don't always act the philoſophers when they ought: Or Mr. *W*. would not ſo often act out of character. Indeed the *cynical* arrogance, and the *democritical* grin, the *facilis cuivis cenſura cachinni*, the impertinent laugh, ſo eaſy even to the moſt vulgar, appear every where, as the unſympathizing *Stoic* does here. But, if the parents had not *philoſophy* enough, to put due bounds to

B.

* P. 21. ‖ Ibid.

their

their grief, muſt *Jeſus* play the inſenſible philoſopher, ſhew no compaſſion, nor give any relief? Yes. *A lecture of patience and reſignation had been enough. Their grief was not ſufficient reaſon for his interpoſing with his almighty power.* Admit it. Might not *Jeſus*, from a perfect knowledge of *time*, *place*, *perſons*, and *all circumſtances*, have reaſon to judge this a proper occaſion, to ſhew both his *humane compaſſion* and his *divine power?* Some circumſtances offer themſelves to us, at this diſtance, which make the *occaſion* very proper. The father applies to *Jeſus*, intreating him to come and heal his dying child. He is a *ruler* of a *ſynagogue*. Such application from ſuch a perſon was very unuſual. And he thinks fit hereupon to break off his *diſcourſes*, and the buſineſs he was about, and goes with him. In the way a meſſage is brought, that the child is dead. What now ſhould *Jeſus* do? Go on, and read the parents *a lecture of patience on this mournful occaſion?* Interrupt his public buſineſs, for this, which was more properly the buſineſs of friends, at leaſt of *more private* perſons? He was come ſo far to heal, as the multitude knew. Should he return *re infectâ?* Did it not rather become him, to ſhew his power to *revive*, ſince he was come too late to *heal?* Was not the opportunity very pat for ſhewing, both to *Jairus* and the *multitude*, that he had power to *raiſe the dead*, as well as *heal the ſick*. And if a regard to *Jairus*'s rank and ſtation, brought him thus far, to give him a conviction of his divine power, in healing his ſick daughter, what more proper, than on the news of her death, to go on, and in purſuit of this purpoſe, raiſe her to life? And how fitly does he, on this view, tell the father, that he ſhould *not* ‖ *fear, only believe.* But † *the widow's ſon was a youth too, a* νεανισκος, *perhaps, no older than the girl: but his life was certainly of no more importance to the world, after, than before his reſurrection.* This man has certainly a *ſuperlative* aſſurance. He pronounces certainly in matters, of which he can know nothing. But he goes on, ‡ *Why had* he *this honour done him, before others*

Why Widows ſon improper?

‖ Mark v. 36. † P. 21. ‡ P. 22.

of greater age, worth, *and* uſe *to mankind?* This will preſently be conſidered. *Some will ſay for the comfort of his ſorrowful mother. And is this reaſon ſufficient? A diſcourſe on the pleaſures of* Abraham's boſom, *where ſhe would e'er long meet her ſon, was enough to chear her heart.* Therefore *Jeſus* ſhould not have raiſed her *ſon*, but only talked to her of the pleaſures of *Abraham*'s *boſom*, where ſhe ſhould ſhortly meet him. But how does he know, that the *ſon* was gone thither, or the *mother* would follow? Would he have had *Jeſus*, as well as himſelf, make a jeſt of *Abraham*'s *boſom*, or talk as impertinently as *he*, rather than raiſe a dead youth, an *only ſon*, for the comfort of a ſorrowful mother? I cannot underſtand the make of this man. He is ſuch a compoſition of *criticiſm*, *allegory*, *philoſophy*, and *grimace*, that nothing of the tender enters into his conſtitution. He is all *apathy* to perſons in diſtreſs, and ſo full of himſelf, as to think every *great character* muſt be deeply tinctured with the ſame *dulneſs* and *inſenſibility*.

B.

But whatever his own taſte be, he will never perſuade the good-natur'd part of mankind, that *Jeſus* had acted a more becoming part, in drolling on the pleaſures of *Abraham*'s *boſom*, than by taking ſuch an occaſion, as here caſually offered, to ſhew his *divine power* in raiſing the dead, and his great *humanity* and *compaſſion* to a diſconſolate *widow*, now made more forlorn by the death of her *only ſon*. The ſtate of ſuch is very comfortleſs in itſelf, and what renders them in a peculiar manner objects of divine *compaſſion* and *protection*; (his *Rabbi* can point him to many paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, where this in *the letter* is very plain) *this* widow is a ſecond time deſtitute by the loſs of her only ſon. And though perhaps, as a *philoſopheſs*, ſhe ſhould have wiped all tears from her eyes, yet as a *tender mother*, having more of what the *poet* calls *noſtri pars optima ſenſus*, humane and maternal affection, ſhe doubtleſs followed the corpſe all drowned in tears. If, as the *ſame poet* obſerves,

Naturæ imperio gemimus cum funus adultæ
Virginis occurrit. Juv. Sat. xv.

Nature

Nature extorts a groan whene'er we meet
The funeral of a maid for wedlock fit. Had not ſhe been unnatural, to feel none of this impulſe, when following the corpſe of her only ſon, not yet ſo much matured? And was not her caſe proper to move compaſſion? And did not the *ſon of God* look like *himſelf*, when on the offer of ſuch an occaſion, he imitates *his father*, and commiſerates the widow, in this very ſorrowful plight, and diſtreſſed ſtate?

'TIS likely there were not many *critics* or *philoſophers* at the funeral, and very likely not one *Merry-Andrew*. But, I dare ſay, every one preſent, thought the raiſing the dead child a very *godlike act*, not only on account of the divine power exerted, but the *tenderneſs*, *mercy* and *compaſſion* manifeſted in it. But

† LAZARUS *was indeed* Jeſus's *friend. This is a better reaſon for raiſing him*, than thoſe he has aſſigned for raiſing the other two. *But ſuppoſing* Jeſus *was to raiſe but three perſons* (which yet he has no right to ſuppoſe) *this reaſon is not ſufficient againſt the* caſes *of many* others *that may be put.* Sufficient for what? For the *manifeſtation* of his power, *illuſtration* of his wiſdom and goodneſs, and the *converſion* of unbelievers. If by *manifeſtation* and *illuſtration*, is meant making more ſhew of his power and goodneſs, *ſuch caſes* may perhaps be put, but whether this had been more becoming his character, will preſently be conſidered. What he means by the *converſion* of *unbelievers*, I do not underſtand.

IF he means making ſuch creatures as himſelf profeſſors of any religion, it had hardly been for the *illuſtration* of *Jeſus*'s wiſdom, to have accommodated himſelf to their taſte and humour. Their converſion would have done little *honour* to his religion. Such a *ludicrous* humour, ſuch a propenſion to inordinate laughter, on the moſt *unnatural* ſubjects, and on the moſt *impertinent* occaſions, would have little ſuited the ſpirit of his religion. And ſuch *merry fellows*, however they might appear among *critics* and *philoſophers*, would have made but

† P. 22.

but a very odd figure among *grave* and *ſerious* chriſtians. Nor can I think *Jeſus* wrought miracles for the *converſion* of *ſuch*, that is, to induce them to profeſs his religion; which is all this man ſeems to mean by it. He offered evidence enough to convince ſuch as were reaſonable: But if any were obſtinately *unreaſonable* and *humourſome*, it was fit they ſhould be left to themſelves.

JESUS had to do with ſome ſuch, whilſt on earth. His conduct towards them, to me, illuſtrates his wiſdom, though he takes no ſuch meaſures for their *converſion*. * *The* Phariſees *and* Sadducees *come to him, and* (notwithſtanding his many *wondrous works*, done in all places, before thouſands, and in view of many even of them) *deſire he would ſhew them a ſign from heaven.* Such, ſay, as raining *Manna*, or ſome preternatural appearance in the air. Now the gratifying them in Mr. *W's* language would *have begotten the applauſe and wonder of the world, and moſt extenſively ſpread* Jeſus's *fame.* But he humours them not. He ſhews no concern for their converſion, but ſees through, and lays open their *hypocriſy*. *When it is evening, ye ſay it will be fair weather*, &c.——Ye hypocrites, *can ye diſcern the face of the ſkies, but can ye not diſcern the ſigns of the times?* q. d. "Muſt miracles be "juſt fitted to *your own* taſte and humour, e'er you'll "believe. Nor would you believe were you ſo *in-* "*dulged*, but expect to be humoured farther." The *hypocriſy* is very diſcernible.

BUT hitherto he has been only *ſkirmiſhing*. Now we are to underſtand why *theſe three* were *more* improper to be raiſed, than many other caſes that might be put. † *An inſignificant boy and girl, and the obſcure* Lazarus, *ſhould not have been raiſed by him preferably to ſuch publick and more deſerving perſons. The doing this is perfectly* unaccountable. What publick and more deſerving perſons? Why, ‖ *an* uſeful magiſtrate, *whoſe life had been a common bleſſing*, *an* induſtrious merchant *whoſe death was a publick loſs*, *a* father *of a numerous* family, *which for a comfortable ſubſiſtance depended on him.*

W. What perſons would have been more proper.

But

* Mat. xvi. *beg.* † P. 25. ‖ P. 24.

But becauſe *Jeſus* made ſo prepoſterous and injudicious a preference, therefore the whole narration is *improbable, incredible, abſurd. Jeſus* raiſed none from the dead at all, *Q. E. D.*

BUT how does it appear, that *wiſdom* required *Jeſus* to prefer, ſuch as he would have had him raiſe, to thoſe the *Evangeliſts* report, and *chriſtians* believe he did? *Why* * *he raiſed the dead not only to manifeſt his own power and glory*—(nor at all in a way of *oſtentation*, and *vain-glory*) *but his love to mankind, and his inclination to do them good. For which reaſon his miracles are uſeful and beneficial, as well as ſtupendous and ſupernatural; to conciliate men's affections, as well as their faith. On this topic our divines are copious and rhetorical; as if no more uſeful or wonderful works could be done, than what he did.* And what more uſeful works could have been done, than *healing the ſick, caſting out devils, giving ſpeech to the dumb, ſight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and legs to the lame, and preaching the goſpel to the poor?* or more *wonderful* than raiſing the dead? And this without ſending any away, who came to him, however *poor* and *mean* their condition, without help and relief? And ſometimes *taking* occaſion, when it came fairly in his way, to do ſuch works, without waiting for ſuch application. And can the *beneficence* of one *who went about doing* this *good*, be too copiouſly or rhetorically diſplay'd? But hear him: † *And I do agree with them, what reaſon beſpeaks.* What is it reaſon beſpeaks, and that ſo plainly, that he will agree with *divines* in it? *That the* miracles *of a pretended* auctor *of* religion, *ought to be both as* great *and* uſeful *as well* could be. What he means, does not at once appear. Moſt men would think, the wondrous works of *Jeſus*, as before mentioned, were ſuch.

‖ No, *ſuch were not* Jeſus's miracles, *and leaſt of all his raiſing the dead?* Why? Can any work be well *greater*, than raiſing the dead? in the account either of the *vulgar* or *philoſophers?* Such a philoſopher as *Pliny*, if I miſtake not, thought it out of divine power *revocare*

B.

Jesus cured all that came.

* P. 23. † Ibid. ‖ Ibid.

revocare defunctos, to call the dead back into life. He would have thought, *to be ſure*, that raiſing the dead, was *as great* a work as *well could be*. And Mr. *W.* * himſelf allows the raiſing ſuch, if indiſputably dead, *a ſtupendous miracle.* And a miracle, in his account *ſtupendous*, reaſon beſpeaks ſhould paſs for a work *as great* as *well could be.* Reaſon and Mr. *W.* and we then ſeem agreed, as to the *greatneſs* of theſe works. But we ſeem to differ, whether they were as *good as could be?*

‖ For *if we conſider the perſons raiſed by him, we ſhall find he could hardly have exerted his power, on any of leſs* importance *to the world, both* before *and* after *their reſurrection. Perſons of* no conſequence *to the world either* before *or ſince.* Where is this to be found? Mr. *W.* has complained, that neither the *evangelical* nor *eccleſiaſtical* ſtory ſays any thing of them. It is not to be found there. Has his *Rabbi* help'd him to any of the *Jewiſh records* that were deſtroyed, e'er the invention of this ſtory? Or has he met with it, in any *Gulliverian tales?* Is he not a man of ſingular modeſty? But he has found, what is no where to be found.

B

The 3 perſons raisd not so very contemptible.

Her Rulers Daughter

Y Widows Son —

But how does it appear theſe were perſons of ſo very little conſequence? Indeed neither of them was an *uſeful magiſtrate, induſtrious merchant*, or *head* of a *numerous* family. But the girl was the daughter of a *ruler* of a *ſynagogue*, and ſo a man of ſome rank, and the daughter might become, for any thing he knows, the *mother* of a *family*, and have great numbers depending on her for a comfortable ſubſiſtance.

The *widow* of *Naïm* was no contemptible perſon, as is plain from the *much people attending her ſon to his grave.* And ſhe herſelf, with her ſon's aſſiſtance, might be as uſeful a perſon at *Naïm*, as an *induſtrious merchant* in a trading city. Merchandize was not the buſineſs of *Jews.* They had few ports, and little foreign traffic. Tilling land, and feeding and breeding cattle, were their chief employments. And a *wealthy farmer* might be as uſeful a man amongſt *them*, as a merchant in *London, cæteris paribus.* So that this

* P. 3. ‖ P. 23.

youth, conſidering the help he might give his mother in her buſineſs, might be a perſon of as much *importance*, as any at *Naïm*, for ought he knows.

NOR was *Lazarus*, though *a friend* of *Jeſus*'s (with which this grinning unbeliever makes himſelf ſo merry) that deſpicable wretch he would paſs him for. It is plain, from many circumſtances, this was a family of *ſome note*. The entertainment frequently made by it for *Jeſus* and his *Apoſtles*, and ‖ reſort of the *Jews* to condole with the ſiſters, prove it. The *box* of *precious ointment* with which *Mary* anointed *Jeſus*'s feet, which * *Judas* ſaid *might have been ſold for* † *three hundred Roman* pence, even though he be ſuppoſed to ſtretch a little, evidences it to be a family of ſome conſiderable wealth. If the ſiſter had ſubſtance, ſufficient for ſo expenſive a piece of reſpect, the brother may well be ſuppoſed no worthleſs man, even according to Mr. *W*'s way of eſtimation. And if he were not the *father* of a *family*, might have been as uſeful a man, and have as numerous dependants.

AND ſuppoſing ſome perſons of *more worth*, in his ſenſe, might have been raiſed than either, muſt *Jeſus* raiſe none from the dead, whilſt there were any more uſeful among thoſe who died during his miniſtry? None but the *moſt uſeful*. Had he raiſed an *uſeful magiſtrate*, though he had been *ſelected at the recommendation of the people of any place*, might not this *unlucky man*, *with as much reaſon*, have told us, *he choſe a very improper perſon, for this exerciſe of his power; for that, doubtleſs, there were perſons of much more importance than he, that died during* Jeſus's *miniſtry?* Nay, had this been the magiſtrate of any city, except *Jeruſalem* the *capital*; nay, any magiſtrate there, but one of the *ſanhedrim*, and he the *moſt uſeful* of them all; there had been ſtill the ſame reaſon for *cavil*, and juſt the ſame reaſon for accounting the *whole ſtory abſurd*, &c.

BUT ** *an* uſeful magiſtrate, *an* induſtrious, *&c. had been the moſt proper for him to raiſe, if he meant to*

‖ John xi. 19. * Chap. xii. 5. † *Between nine and ten pounds ſterling.* ** P. 24.

be as uſeful as he could. But, what if, in Mr. *W*'s ſenſe, he did not mean to be *as uſeful* as *he could*, nor in any ſenſe to do good to the utmoſt of his power: Was he not then fit to be the author of a religion? It ſeems Mr. *W*. thinks ſo; or elſe his conſequence is very wrong. But if this is a wrong thought, then he might be the *author* of a *religion*, and work miracles to atteſt his authority, though they were not the moſt uſeful he *could do*. And thoſe in the goſpel may be credited, though he did not raiſe the moſt important perſons to life that in his time *could be raiſed*.

B. The deſign of miracles not to do ye utmoſt Good poſſible.

And Mr. *W*. ſeems quite out, in the proper buſineſs of the *author* of a *religion*. The *ſpiritual weal* of mankind was what, in this character, *Jeſus* had in view. And to teach them a ſpiritual religion, ſuitable to the nature both of God and man, was his buſineſs. His *miraculous powers* were but inſtruments to forward this deſign. By theſe, his *divine authority* and *miſſion* was to be atteſted; and among the reſt by his *raiſing the dead*. But even in proſecuting this deſign, he was not to do the *utmoſt* good *he could*, or the utmoſt good that *could be done*. He might have made a conqueſt of every heart that heard him; for who can doubt whether this were within the reach of *divine power*. But his religion was to be ſettled in the world, in a way more accommodate to the *ſtate* of *man*. In a way of rational *inſtruction* and *conviction*, ſuch as might leave room for choice. And it was *to be* embraced upon proper motives and conſiderations. Fit it was, that he who came on ſo *uſeful* an *errand*, furniſhed with miraculous powers, ſhould employ his divine power in acts of *external beneficence*, to diſplay the *benignity* of both himſelf and his religion; and thoſe in *the general* the moſt uſeful that *could be*, if Mr. *W*. pleaſes. But not that, in every particular inſtance, he was to conſider if there were not ſome other perſon in being, on whom his power might be *more* uſefully employed. This I am ſure muſt have left room for *endleſs cavil*. And himſelf was fitteſt to judge, on whom this power was to be diſplayed. If he had not diſcretion for this purpoſe, he

was

was not fit to be entruſted with ſuch *full powers.* And chriſtians will think it much more reaſonable to argue, *Jeſus* did raiſe ſuch perſons, therefore they were *proper* for him to exerciſe his power on, than the contrary way into which Mr. *W.* has fallen. He had a *full view* of his own deſign, and fully knew what was proper for him to do, which, it is no *preſumption* to ſay Mr. *W.* does not, nor can know: and it is the *height* of *preſumption* in him to pretend to it. And to define with that *confidence* he does, on *ſuch preſumption*, may humour his own vanity, and pleaſure thoughtleſs infidels, but muſt ſhock all men of *ſenſe* and *ſobriety.*

W.

BUT,* *The raiſing ſuch perſons would have begotten the applauſe, as well as wonder of the world: and muſt extenſively have ſpread* Jeſus's *fame, and have gained him the* love *and* diſcipleſhip, *of all who heard of his being ſuch a* benefactor *to mankind. This had proved him a moſt* benign, *as well as* mighty agent. *And none in* intereſt *or* prejudice *could have opened their mouths againſt him;* eſpecially *had the perſons raiſed been ſelected on the recommendation of this or that city.* Now the *ſecret* is out. No wonder Mr. *W.* can diſcover ſo many *improprieties* in the miracles of *Jeſus.* He thought he ſhould have been *altogether ſuch a one as himſelf*, who would work wonders to be ſtared at, and gain the eſteem of the great and rich, and ſpread his fame. Had *Jeſus* been covetous of humane eſteem and applauſe, or ambitious of empire and worldly dominion, or fond of flattering the fleſhly prejudices of the *Jews*, who expected a great temporal prince in their *Meſſias*; this had been no *improper* way to compaſs his ends. But it had been utterly unſuitable to his character, and directly counter to his *true deſign.* A *miniſter* ſent from *heaven* to teach men deadneſs to the world, and all its intereſts and glories, and raiſe their hearts to God and heaven, would in this way, have deſtroyed his *character*, and ruined his *deſign.* He would have appeared *the reverſe* to what, by precept, example, and his miraculous powers, he was to recommend to the world. *Jeſus*'s buſineſs

B.

not to spread his own fame & honour.

* P. 24, 25.

ſineſs was not, by ſuch *pompous ſhew* of his powers, to court the rich, the great, the rulers of the world, and gain himſelf a name, amongſt *them:* but rather to expoſe himſelf to their *ſcorn*, *contempt* and *hatred*, that in his own *lowlineſs*, *meekneſs*, *patience*, and *ſelf-denial*, he might ſhew forth the excellency and power of his religion, and by his own example recommend it. Nothing that looked like vanity, affectation or fondneſs for a name, was *becoming* him. For him to have ſingled out the *uſeful magiſtrate*, the *induſtrious merchant*, &c. the worthy perſons on whom Mr. *W.* would have had him exerciſe his *healing* and *reviving* powers, would have had ſuch an appearance.

His chief buſineſs, as the *author* of a *religion*, was to inſtruct his diſciples and the people in his religion, and engage them to embrace it. *Working miracles* was but an under-buſineſs, in ſubſerviency to this. And they who gave attention to his doctrine, and applied to him for the exerciſe of his uſeful divine powers, were ordinarily the moſt *worthy*, that is, *fit* and *proper* perſons for *ſuch* exerciſe. *Such* he never refuſed. And very rarely took occaſion to exert his power on any *others*; or if he did, 'twas commonly as they came in his way, in the courſe of his other buſineſs. And perſons of the *meaneſt condition* were as welcome to him, as the greateſt; *beggars* and the *poor*, as *merchants* or *rulers*, without any derogation, one may hope, to his *benignity*. And this was every way more becoming his character, than to have *ſelected* himſelf, ſuch worthy perſons as Mr. *W.* would have had him raiſe, or have gone at the call of *magiſtrates* or *people*, to raiſe ſuch as they might *recommend*.

Nor was the *condition* or *rank* of the perſon raiſed, any way material in the caſe. The raiſing *miraculouſly* was the proper atteſtation to his miſſion. Where *that* was done, *this* was atteſted. They who ſaw it done, ſhould have believed it, *then*; as they ſhould, who heard it credibly reported, and ſo ſhould all now.

W. But when he tells us *the raiſing ſuch worthy perſons, would have gained* Jeſus *the love and diſcipleſhip, of all who*

who heard of his being ſuch a benefactor *to* mankind, *ſuch a* benign, *as well as* mighty *agent*; *no one in intereſt or prejudice would have opened their mouths againſt him:* He ſhould at leaſt have added, had they liked his *doctrine*, and reliſhed his *religion*. His *benignity* and *benefactions* had never elſe made them his diſciples. If inſtead of *a boy*, *a girl*, and *the obſcure Lazarus*, he had raiſed *an uſeful magiſtrate*, &c. can any, can Mr. *W.* or his *Rabbi* think, the Scribes, and Phariſees, and *hireling prieſts* of that day, would have loved him, and become his diſciples? Would ſuch inſtances of *beneficence*, have prevailed with *them* to renounce their corrupt principles, all the honour and eſteem they had with the people, all the worldly emoluments accruing to them, and pocket up all his plain-dealing with them, for their groſs hypocriſy, into the bargain? B.

JESUS had, could have, no reaſonable expectations of this ſort. His doctrine, he knew, could not procure many diſciples, it carried too much *contrariety* in it to the humours, appetites, and prevailing vices of mankind. He ſought no *fame*, but in ſubſerviency to his deſign of ſetting up his religion in the world. The moſt extenſive renown for a *miracle-worker*, without this effect, would have been of as little eſteem with him, as to have been celebrated for an *uſeful magiſtrate* or *induſtrious merchant*. And if in Mr. *W*'s way he had procured more followers, and admirers of his perſon, what would this have ſignified, if they did not heartily embrace *his religion?* Did he covet, did he ſeek ſuch diſciples? From many paſſages in his ſtory, it is plain he did not. The *honour* of God, the advancement of *true ſpiritual* religion, as became a meſſenger from heaven, was his plain manifeſt deſign: not to procure fame by the renown of his *miracles*, or the *great numbers* and *high rank* of his profeſſed followers. That *the great*, *the noble*, *the wiſe* in common eſteem, ſhould become *his* true diſciples, he had no reaſon to expect. And to get renown, and procure their eſteem, by benefactions ſuited to *their* taſte, was every way unworthy his *character*, and unſuitable to

his *deſign*. And Mr. *W*. muſt groſſly miſunderſtand both, or he would not have argued at this rate.

C^t came to be a Sacrifice for Sin, now had all men lov'd him, they wd not have put him to death.

AND had *his* method been taken, and the effect he promiſes followed hereupon, *and all that heard of ſuch a benefactor, been made lovers and diſciples of Jeſus*, a main end of his coming into the world had been directly fruſtrated. Chriſtians believe a chief purpoſe of his coming, was to be made a *ſacrifice for ſin*. How ſhould he have been put to death as a criminal, had all men loved him, and become his diſciples? If his working miracles in Mr. *W*'s way, had been proper for *this* purpoſe, it had been improper for *his*, as running counter to this great intention of his coming into the world. This Mr. *W*. may laugh at, but thoſe who *glory in a Chriſt crucified*, think this a matter of too much importance to be overlooked, in the *propriety* of *Jeſus*'s miracles. They found their hopes of pardon and life on his death, and can't think *thoſe* miracles, or *that* way of working them, which would have prevented this, to have been *proper* for *him* to work or take. And if Mr. *W*. be ſure of *his* conſequence, *they* will infer from it, that all his talk on this head, is contradictory and ruinous to itſelf; and that how ſagacious and critical ſoever, he is pleaſed to repreſent *himſelf*, he does not really know when he is diſputing *for* or *againſt Jeſus*'s religion, and the proper evidences of it.

W.

Why not John the Baptiſt raiſed?

BUT now, * it *comes into his head to ask, why* Jeſus *did not raiſe* John *the* Baptiſt *to life? A perſon of greater merit, and more worthy the favour of* Jeſus *and* this miracle, *could not be. And why did he not raiſe* him? *Was it a thing out of* Jeſus's *power?* No certainly. *Could he not by force or perſuaſion have reſcued* John's *head out of the hands of his enemies?* Yes, and without either. *And the tacking it to his body, and infuſing new life into it, was not more difficult to* Jeſus, *than the reſuſcitation of a ſtinking carcaſs.* Doubtleſs, nor the infuſing new life into both, without tacking them at all. What then? *If* Jeſus *had exerted his power, and raiſed his deareſt friend and choiceſt miniſter for the* preparation,

* P. 25.

paration, *if not* propagation *of the goſpel, none could queſtion his ability to raiſe others, though he had raiſed no more.* This is not out of doubt. Mr. *W.* knows one who could and would have queſtioned it, unleſs it had been done in his *own way*, upon *due* recommendation, and before the perſons he thinks fit ſhould have *been preſent.* He could have ſuggeſted, the head *might* be ſtolen, and the body transferred to a place unknown, that it might not be found on enquiry, and a perſon reſembling him, a *mere Perkin* trumpt up in his room. He is ſuch an enemy to the *letter*, that without the *myſtery*, this ſtory might have been as *fooliſh*, *fabulous* and *fictitious* as any now on our records, and ruined their *Credit.*

B.
anſ. 1.

AND why ſhould the raiſing him put *Jeſus*'s ability to raiſe others, more out of queſtion, than the raiſing *Lazarus?* I can ſee no reaſon for it, unleſs he muſt, becauſe his head was cut off, be *more* dead, or *more certainly* dead, than one who had been four days buried, and was become a *ſtinking carcaſs.* If both were *equally* dead, *equal* power muſt be ſhewn in their revival; and *Jeſus* his ability to raiſe, muſt, in either caſe, *equally* appear. I cannot therefore believe, that ſuch as, upon *three miracles*, will not believe *Jeſus*'s ability to raiſe the dead, would have reckoned this ability out of queſtion, on the *ſingle report* of his having raiſed *John*, eſpecially ſince the credit of it muſt have reſted, on the veracity and authority of the *ſame reporters.*

anſ. 2.

BUT ſays he, * *Since* Jeſus *did not raiſe him, ſince one of ſuch ſingular* merits *and* ſervices *towards him, was overlooked, when three ſuch* inſignificant *perſons were raiſed, if the* myſtery *helps not, their* literal ſtories *may be accounted fooliſh, fabulous, and fictitious.* And who can doubt, if *John* had been raiſed, but the ſame *wiſe accounters*, without the ſame help, would have had this ſtory in the ſame account? But does he offer any reaſon for this? None, unleſs this be one. † *If* Jeſus *could raiſe any from the dead*, ſurely *he would have raiſed him.* His aſſurance never fails, however his reaſons

* P. 26. † P. 25.

ſons may. But how comes he to be ſo ſure, that if *Jeſus could* have raiſed any, he *would* have raiſed *John?* Not becauſe he was his *friend.* For if Mr. *W.* gueſſes right, this was no ‖ reaſon why *Lazarus* ſhould be raiſed. But he was his *choiceſt miniſter for the preparation of the goſpel,* (we'll underſtand him, to prepare for the goſpel) and ſo he was, not only his *choiceſt miniſter,* but at that time the *ſole one.* This work was done, and he was gone to his reward. Should his *ſingular merits* towards *Jeſus* in this ſervice, be a reaſon for calling him back, to the troubles of life? Not with Mr. *W.* for it *was hardly a good work in* Jeſus, † he tells us, *to call* Lazarus's *ſoul from paradiſe for this purpoſe.*

BUT perhaps he had been his * *choiceſt miniſter* for the *propagation of the goſpel.* And perhaps not. I know no reaſon for it offered by this author, but the *chime* of *preparation* and *propagation,* for the ſake of which he has blundered in the ſenſe of this paſſage. *John*'s buſineſs was the preparatory miniſtry. Others were to be employed in propagating the goſpel, and furniſhed with *ample powers* to procure them credit. Nor had *John,* when alive, ſuch ample powers; nor would he have had, when revived, more ample ones. Nor could his ſingle aſſeveration, that he was raiſed from the dead, have rendered *Jeſus*'s power to raiſe ſuch more credible, than the *Apoſtles* teſtimony to the facts they report, confirmed by their *own* miraculous powers and operations. His ſaying then, *that if* Jeſus could *raiſe any, he* would *have raiſed* John, is no argument of any thing, but his own *ſingular* confidence.

§. IV. *Mr.* W's Fourth Remark *conſidered.*

BUT, ‡ *None of theſe three had been long enough dead to amputate all doubt of* Jeſus's *miraculous power in their reſurrection.* Why? *Jairus*'s daughter *was but juſt expired, when* Jeſus *brought her to life again, if ſhe was dead.* But if ſhe was dead, ſhe was as much dead as ſhe would have been at three *days,* three *weeks,* or three

‖ P. 24. † P. 34. * P. 26. ‡ Ibid.

three *years* end. * *The raiſing one indiſputably dead*, himſelf ſays, *is a ſtupendous miracle.* If then ſhe was really dead, ſuch a ſtupendous miracle was wrought in her revival. But if ſhe were *really* dead, ſhe might not be *indiſputably* ſo. I know not what with him is indiſputable. If all about her knew her to be really dead, I ſhould take it, that it was *out of diſpute*; this was the caſe. No, ſays he †, *it is* not impoſſible, *that the paſſionate ſcreams of feminine by-ſtanders, might frighten her into fits, that bore the appearance of death. Why otherwiſe did* Jeſus *turn theſe inordinate weepers out of the houſe, before he could bring her into her ſenſes again?* Is the man in earneſt, or only pleaſing himſelf, to lead unthinking infidels by the noſe? What *feminine by-ſtanders* ſhould ſcream her into fits? Her mother, or nurſe, or any relations preſent? Theſe, if they ſaw her in a ſwoon, might poſſibly give a ſhriek; but this was more likely to recover her *out* of ſuch a ſtate, than to throw her *into it.* People don't uſe, unleſs in ſuch a caſe, to ſcream about the ſick. The *inordinate weepers* who were turned out of the houſe, e'er *Jeſus* could bring her into *her ſenſes*, as he ſays, were *not feminine by-ſtanders*, but the αυλητὰι and the ὄχλον θορυβούμενον, the *pipers* and *croud attending them*, who wept and wailed to their doleful muſick. But theſe were not *by-ſtanders*, but in another room. Nor were theſe pipers admitted into any houſe, till the perſon they lamented was dead, *indiſputably* dead. By the ſcreams of ſuch *by-ſtanders*, it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould be frightened into a fit, therefore; unleſs ſhe might be frightened into one, when dead. But ſay it was not utterly impoſſible, that yet ſuch a *wild conceit*, ſo remote a *non-impoſſibility*, ſhould be made the ground of ſuch an inference, that *this*, *with* Jeſus's *telling her parents*, *that ſhe was only in a ſleep* (which is alſo *nonſenſe*) *is deſtructive of the miracle, and makes no more of it than another man might do*, ſhews Mr. *W.* much in haſte to come at his *concluſion*, be the premiſes what they will.

W

B. 1.

2.

* P. 3. † P. 27.

He does not pretend, that this fact was the reſult of *confederacy*. The girl was only in a fit or trance, and *Jeſus* only fetched her out of it, as another man might do. How improbable, if not utterly impoſſible, this is, any one who attends to the *ſeries* of the *ſtory*, may ſee. Here is the *ruler* of a *ſynagogue* coming to *Jeſus*, and begging he would go and heal his daughter, * at the *point* of *death*, † dying, in the laſt extremity, when he left her, as the *reports* ſay. And, it is very likely, one of *his* rank, would not come on ſuch an errand to *Jeſus*, till all other means failed. A croud hear him make this application, and attend *Jeſus* to the houſe. 'Tis very likely the croud gathers by the way. In ſuch a throng, they cannot make the utmoſt haſte. And by the way he is interrupted by the cure of the *menſtruous woman*. At the cloſe hereof, ſervants bring the father word, that the child is dead, and deſire he would give *Jeſus* no farther trouble, it being now too late to heal. Had not thoſe about her known ſhe was dead, this meſſage had not been ſent. But *Jeſus* knowing his power and purpoſe, heartens him up with the hope of a revival. When they come to the houſe, the *pipers* were already there, which ſhews not only that ſhe was dead, but had been dead *ſome time*. And this is the reaſon of their laughing *Jeſus* to ſcorn, on his ſaying *ſhe is not dead but ſleepeth*; underſtanding him of *proper ſleep*, as Mr. *W.* affects to do. Theſe circumſtances make it manifeſt, that ſhe was *really* dead, *indiſputably* ſo. And

First, She was neer death,

Then dead,

Then wailers & pipers were let in —

They Laught at Jesus calling it aſleep.

It is as manifeſt *Jeſus* ſuppoſed her dead, both *before* his coming to the houſe, and *after* he was entered. When the ſervants met their maſter with the report that ſhe was dead, to prevent his coming forward, it is plain the family had no expectation of her revival. But *Jeſus* tells the father, he ſhould *not fear, but only believe*. If he were an arrant juggler, as Mr. *W.* would repreſent him, how could he pronounce with ſuch aſſurance? If ſhe were dead, and he had no power to revive, he run a deſperate riſque of ruining his credit, by ſuch pre-

How could Jesus tell she was only in a fit.

* ἐσχάτως ἔχει. Mark v. 23. † ἀπόθνησκεν. Luke viii. 42.

preſumption. And how ſhould he know ſhe was only in a fit? Not from the father's firſt report; who brings word *ſhe was dying.* Not by the ſervants ſecond report, who bring word *ſhe is dead.* What ſecret intelligence can he be ſuppoſed to have? Had he *ſpies* in the family, more ſagacious than all the girl's friends, who could perceive ſhe was only in a fit, when they thought her ſtark dead? He does not talk here like a *juggler*, but a *miracle-worker*, who knew that the child was dead, and that he had power to raiſe her, when he goes on with this aſſurance to do it. When he comes into the houſe, and finds the *pipers*, and their *wailing tribe*, he tells them, *ſhe is not dead, but ſleepeth*; by which he could not mean *proper ſleep*, having not yet ſeen or enquired about her, nor been in the room where ſhe lay; but plainly means, that though ſhe was dead he would raiſe her. Otherwiſe to talk with ſuch aſſurance upon the groundleſs preſumption ſhe was only in *a fit*, of which he could have no information or certainty, if he were a *juggler*, would prove him no *cunning* one. So that it is highly reaſonable to believe ſhe was dead, nor was there any need, that for the ſake of an *indiſputable* miracle, ſhe ſhould have been buried *ſome days* or *weeks*.

As to the *widow* of *Naim*'s ſon, * he ſays, *there was more appearance of death. He was carried forth to his burial, and ſo may be preſumed to be really a dead corpſe. But might there be no miſtake?* Impertinence! Has he any evidence to ſet againſt this report, or ſhew this was the caſe? No, but it poſſibly *might be*, and therefore this was no *indiſputable* miracle. If he means a miracle capable of ſtrict demonſtration, we allow it. Of this no fact is capable. But if he means as *indiſputable* as any matter of fact may be, he concludes too faſt according to cuſtom. It is no reaſon to queſtion a fact, becauſe abſtractly conſidered it may poſſibly be a miſtake. If counter-teſtimony may be produced of equal authority, this is a reaſon, and the *only fair* reaſon for calling it in queſtion; unleſs there be plain marks of

W. Widows ſon. B.

* P. 27.

abſurdity and *incredibility* in the thing itſelf. But let us hear him out.

W. * HISTORY *and* common fame *afford inſtances of the miſtaken deaths of perſons, who ſometimes have been unfortunately buried, and at other times happily, by ſome means or other reſtored to life.* But has he *hiſtory* or *common fame* for his belief, that this was the caſe of the *widow's ſon?* If not, why ſhould he not on the *hiſtory* of the goſpel, and the *common fame* among chriſtians, in all ages, believe his reſurrection, as well as on *his* hiſtory and common fame, believe theſe inſtances? Has he any proof of the miſtake? If not, what does his *may-be*, his *mere poſſibility* ſignify, againſt the plain teſtimony of the *evangeliſt?* If ſome ſuch inſtances have been, do we hear of two in an age? Now ſuppoſing two ſuch fall out in *London* in an age, where five or ſix and twenty thouſand are buried in a year, how many *hundred thouſand* is it to *one*, that this inſtance was not miſtake? And is ſuch a remote *may-be*, any reaſonable ground to disbelieve the miracle?

B. AND ſuch inſtances ſeldom, very ſeldom happen, but in caſe of *unexpected* death. And becauſe *they* have happened, is there no knowing *with certainty*, that perſons are dead, in all *ordinary caſes?* I can't ſee then, that any are to be buried, till their *ſtench* makes them intolerable to the living, and gives certain proof of *putrefaction*, if they may be buried even *then*; or till they have been kept beyond the utmoſt time, in which any ſuppoſed dead, have come to themſelves, it were very inhumane to bury any, if we may not be certain they are dead. But indeed there is not an old nurſe in *town* or *country*, but can tell him they certainly know when the ſick expired, and are verily dead. And this being ſo, is there any ground to imagine, *a widow* would carry out her *only ſon* to burial, without ſuch aſſurance? And are his *may-be's* of any force againſt ſuch probability?

BUT, adds he, † *Who knows but* Jeſus, *upon ſome information or other, might ſuſpect this youth to be in a*

 lethargick

* P. 28. † Ibid.

lethargick ſtate, *and had a mind to try, if by* chafing, &c. *he might do*, what ſucceſsfully he did, *bring him to his ſenſes?* Who knows but Mr. *W.* is really out of his ſenſes? It is the beſt conſtruction to be put on his preſent conduct. One in his ſenſes could never offer ſuch wild, unaccountable *ſuppoſitions* and *might-be's*, as ſerious argument, againſt a plain, honeſt narration of a matter of fact. Had he any *other* hiſtory of equal character and credit, any *authentick records* of antient times, that never yet ſaw light, to oppoſe to it, and ſupport theſe *may-be's*, there were reaſon why we ſhould attend to him. But to combat hiſtory of *ſuch eſtabliſhed credit*, with wild, improbable *may-be's*, is not *reaſoning* but *raving*.

THIS widow ſuppoſes her only ſon dead, makes a funeral for him, carries him out to burial. Could neither herſelf, nor any about her, friends nor phyſicians, perceive any ſymptoms of *life*, any tokens of *lethargick dozing*; and yet an unknown ſomebody gives ſuch hints of this to *Jeſus*, as might *raiſe ſuſpicions in him, that by chafing*, &c. *he might fetch him to his ſenſes?* They muſt be very plain hints, and very well-founded ſuſpicions, upon very good information, that would carry a *juggler* this length, and make him ſet up for a *raiſer of the dead*. And yet neither mother, nurſe, phyſicians, *&c.* have the leaſt ſuſpicion of it! *Credat Judæus Apella.* Let Mr. *W.* and his *Rabbi* believe this, if they can. To all the reaſonable world, this muſt look improbable. But when Mr. *W.* ſays, Jeſus *had ſuſpicions, that by chafing* &c. *he might do*, what he ſucceſsfully did, *fetch him to his ſenſes*; it is a ſpecimen of his honeſty and ingenuity. Is there the leaſt hint in all the ſtory, that by chafing, or any other means, he fetched him to his ſenſes? Or that he did any thing more, than *touch the bier*, and bid the *young man ariſe?* B.

BUT he has another *may-be* in this caſe. * *Might not a* piece *of* fraud *be here concerted*——*and the* formalities *of a death and burial contrived, that* Jeſus, *whoſe fame for a worker of miracles, was to be raiſed, might* W.

have

* P. 28.

have an opportunity to make a ſhew of a grand one. This is groſs, and, to be feared, wilful miſrepreſentation. *Jeſus* no where appears to have affected fame or renown for himſelf by working miracles, as has been ſhewn † above. He wrought miracles in ſubſerviency to his other deſign, as an atteſtation to his *divine character* and *miſſion.* Nor do his Evangeliſts magnify his miraculous operations, nor ſay any thing of them, but as a branch of their general hiſtory. Nothing can be more remote from *Jeſus*'s character, than greedineſs of fame, or coming at his wiſh, by *artifice*, *ſham*, and *fraud.*

B.

AND by whom might this fraud be concerted? ‖ *By* Jeſus, *a ſubtil youth, his mother, and others. Riſum teneatis!* A little way off, this youth is an *inſignificant boy, hardly older than the girl not above twelve years old.* Now he is ripened into ſuch an head-piece, as to be in concert with *Jeſus*, his *mother*, and *others*, no one knows who, to cheat the world with a *ſham-reſurrection*; in which he is to play the hardeſt part, to feign himſelf ſick and dead, and be carried out to his burial, that *Jeſus* might have *the fame* of raiſing him to life. That this *inſignificant boy* ſhould be of ſuch ſignificancy, as to be taken into concert, for laying, and be intruſted with the conduct and execution of the moſt difficult branch of ſuch a plot, is *monſtrouſly probable*, is it not?

1. Could this inſignificant boy be in ſuch a plot?

AND for *what end*, ſhould this ſubtil youth play this part? For the honour of *Jeſus, to raiſe his fame for a* miracle-worker. Exceeding likely! What, out of pure diſintereſted regard to *Jeſus*'s fame, without fee or reward? This boy had early, a very high taſte for fame, and a very great and generous mind, when regard to a *juggler*'s fame would carry him ſuch a length, without any proſpect of recompence. And who ſhould recompence him? Who ſhould be even at the charge of the *formalities* of a *death* and *burial*, beſides himſelf, mother, and thoſe others, no one knows who. *Jeſus* himſelf could not, unleſs he were indeed a *worker* of *miracles.* And what ſhould move others to help him out?

2. What could he get by it?

† P. 39, 40, 41. ſupra. ‖ P. 28.

out? Could he propoſe any worldly advantage to bring them into his meaſures, and make them ſo exceeding thirſty of his fame? Had he any places of honour or profit in his diſpoſal, who ‡ *had not where to lay his head?* Or was it a mere luſt of growing renowned *themſelves*, by being his followers and confederates? One ſo hated by the men of chief rank and eſteem in the country where he lived! Would they come into a plot, to make a *juggling cheat* a worker of miracles, and clothe him with divine authority, in plain defiance of the *wrath* both of *earth* and *heaven*, and without any proſpect of advantage to themſelves, but empty fame? Strange witchcraft indeed! It is a wonder the *Phariſees* had not hit on this proof of his confederacy with *Beelzebub*. But the ſagacious Mr. *W.* was not among them.

3. How ſhould this fraud be covered?

BUT how ſhould this fraud be covered, when * *much people of the town was preſent?* Were all in the ſecret? And all ſo reſerved, as not to blab it out? Or had none the curioſity, ſo common in our days, to turn aſide the *napkin*, and look on the ſham corpſe? Or was this bound about too cloſe to be looſed? Or had this *inſignificant boy* an art to counterfeit death, and, in all his bloom, look as pale and wan as a carcaſs? Or if an artificial colouring might alter his hew, had he the *art* to ſet his *eyes* and *teeth*, and accommodate his *other features* to thoſe of a dead face? Or hold his breath, whilſt curioſity might ſate itſelf, by looking on him? Or had he the power in his grave-clothes to be ſtretched on a bier, or in a coffin, whilſt he was carried out of the city to his burial, without ſhifting poſtures, or any motion to eaſe himſelf? If not, muſt not this be perceived by the *bearers?* And were they too in the ſecret? Or if he were bolſtered up, could the *juggler*, in the view of ſuch a multitude, convey the bolſters off unobſerved? Or were all the *multitude* in the plot? Every conſiderate reader will ſee, how utterly unlikely it is this ſhould be a fraud.

To which may be added, that the *Evangeliſt* reports, that upon his revival, † *fear fell on all, and they glorified God,*

‡ Luke ix. 58. * Chap. vii. 13. † Luke vii. 16.

God, saying, that a great prophet was risen amongst them, and that God had visited his people. Can it be imagined that the great God would, in this manner countenance a *wicked* juggler, and let him go on abusing the people in his *awful name*, without detection or controul?

W. But he has not done; ‡ *The mourning of the widow, who had tears at command, and* Jesus's *casual meeting the corpse on the road, look like contrivance, to put the better face on the matter.* Did ever writer copy nature so exactly as this *paraboliſt?* I dare say, not one man in

B. the world besides, but would conclude, upon seeing a *widow* following her *only son*, weeping, to his burial, that he was verily dead. But to him, the mourning of the widow looks like *contrivance*, to put a face on a sham. Indeed her following with *dry eyes*, would not have well covered such a contrivance, but it had been much more natural. No, says he, *the widow had tears at command.* How does he know? Was he one of her acquaintance? Or is it a compliment to all widows as mere *mock-mourners?* That Mr. *W.* may laugh, he observes no decorum. All that come in *his* way are outraged by him. But not only do the widows tears, *but* Jesus's *casual meeting the corpse look like contrivance.* There had been some sense in this, had he here been content with a *might-be*; but to say *accident* looks like *design*, makes him look like a very *careless writer*, or a very bad judge of *look.*

To this shrewd argument, he tacks a piece of horrible profaneness: ‖ *God forbid that I should suspect there was any fraud of this kind here.* To what purpose then is all his preceding talk? What his immediate hint, that Jesus *the juggler had been detected in other tricks before?* What his close of the paragraph, *that without the* mystery, Jesus's *stopping the corpse on the road, leaves too much room for suspicion of cheat?* Yet God forbid he should suspect any fraud. Is not this shocking, and making a *jest* of God himself, as well as *Jesus*'s miracles. Or is it enough to say the *possibility* of a cheat was all he aimed to make out, and of this *none can doubt?*

‡ P. 28. ‖ Ibid.

doubt? But all circumſtances conſidered, a cheat in the caſe is hardly *poſſible*; however, it is utterly unlikely. And this is ſufficient ground for believing the ſtory, on the credit of ſuch a reporter. But he has not done.

* WHERE *there is a* poſſibility *of* fraud, *it is* nonſenſe, *and mere* credulity, *to talk of a real, certain, and ſtupendous miracle: eſpecially where the* juggler *and pretended miracle-worker has been detected in ſome of his other tricks.* This is he, who, but a few lines before, could ſay, *God forbid he ſhould ſuſpect any fraud*, &c. Is not much regard, after this, due to any thing he ſays? But what *other tricks* are they, wherein *Jeſus* has been detected? Who detected them? When Mr. *W.* has made this out, ſome regard will be due to him: but to intimate ſuch a thing without *proof*, and expect *his word* ſhould be taken for it, is *monſtrouſly huge* effrontery.

BUT why, where there *is a poſſibility of fraud, is it nonſenſe*, &c. Is not a miracle a *matter* of *fact?* Is it not enough for the reaſonable belief of any fact, that it is reported by *eye-witneſſes* of undoubted credit; and there is nothing in the report, that carries any mark of *deceit, falſhood*, or *improbability?* Is nothing to be believed for a real, certain matter of fact, unleſs he may be ſure miſtake is impoſſible? Should this maxim paſs in common life; would it not put a ſtop to all humane affairs, and indeed make a common wreck of all the buſineſs of the world?

WOULD this very *author* be willing, that in his own caſe men ſhould make this a rule of judging? I doubt not but *Thomas Woolſton*, B. D. *ſometime Fellow*, &c. values himſelf *ſuperlatively*, on ſome ludicrous diſcourſes uttered in his name, on the *miracles of our Saviour:* nor would loſe the fame of being their author, at almoſt any price. Now when thoſe who ſaw him write theſe out for the preſs, without a copy before him, report this fact, his *friends* and *intimates* concur in the ſame report, the *copies* in his own hand-writing may be ſeen at the *printer's*, would he not reckon the world very *incredulous*, who ſhould call this fact in queſtion, and diminiſh,

* P. 28, 29.

niſh, ſo far, his *fame* and *glory*? And yet it is poſſible, full as poſſible, as that the miracle of raiſing the *widow's ſon* ſhould be *ſham*; that this *T. W.* is not the *real author*, but the mere *retailer* of this ribaldry, having both matter and form at ſecond-hand, or from the clubs and company he is ſaid to attend. To talk therefore, that he is the *real, certain author* of theſe diſcourſes, is *nonſenſe* and *mere credulity*. Is this argument in his caſe? then he is a mere pretended writer of theſe diſcourſes. But if not, neither is it in the caſe before us.

THE certainty of *mathematical* truth or evidence, *facts* are not capable of. What we are not witneſſes to *ourſelves*, we muſt take upon credit from *others*. And that is evidence in this caſe, that ſhould put it out of doubt with all reaſonable men. Thoſe who were witneſſes to the raiſing the *widow's ſon*, and knew all the circumſtances, muſt know certainly whether it were *fraud* or *fact*, a *real* or a *ſham-miracle:* Whether the death and burial were *real* or mere *formality*; whether the widow's tears were *unfeigned* or *counterfeit*; whether *Jeſus*'s meeting the corpſe were *caſual* or *contrived*. Such witneſſes report this to *Luke* as fact. *He* tells it us upon *their* authority. There is nothing in the fact or report, that has any appearance of cheat. Why then ſhould it not be believed? eſpecially when theſe reporters were ordained of God *to bear witneſs* to theſe facts, and to them himſelf * *bore witneſs by ſigns and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*. It is not *nonſenſe* and *credulity* to believe this a real miracle on ſuch teſtimony; but it is *wilful* and *ſtubborn* incredulity to diſbelieve it, and upon this author's foot, wild and extravagant.

W. Lazarus.

As to *Lazarus*, he ſays, † *Had he been buried four days, and putrefied, his reſuſcitation was a grand and indiſputable miracle*. Well then; has he any evidence to the contrary? None at all but ſome mere *may-be's*. Only as he is pleaſed here to talk *en* infidel, theſe *may-be's* are out of doubt. ‖ *Whether* Lazarus, *who was* Jeſus's

* Heb. ii. 4. † P. 29. ‖ Ibid.

Jeſus's friend *and beloved diſciple, would not come into meaſures, for the defence of his honour, and propagation of his* fame; *infidels, who* take *Chriſtianity for* impoſture, *will* not queſtion. And if what *infidels* take for impoſture, muſt be ſuch, and what they will not queſtion, is *out of queſtion*, the buſineſs is done: And Mr. *W.* has taken much unneceſſary pains, and deſerving little thanks. But if *chriſtians* take their religion for *divine*, and every thing in the *evangelical hiſtory* to be out of queſtion, they are *even* with infidels, and all farther debate is ſuperfluous.

BUT the *queſtion* is, whether infidels have *ſufficient grounds* to ſupport this acceptation of Chriſtianity; or to conclude, that *Jeſus* would take any *diſhoneſt* meaſures, to *defend his own honour*, or *propagate his fame*; or any beloved diſciple of his, would come into ſuch meaſures with him. If not, it is neither wiſdom with regard to *themſelves*, nor juſtice to him and his religion, to believe or ſuggeſt any ſuch thing, but *blind* and *fooliſh* temerity. And nothing can be more injurious to his character and *theirs*, than ſuch a ſuppoſition. If infidels will make no queſtion of this, they are very prone to believe one way, however ſlow to believe another. They can believe *at a venture*, againſt Chriſtianity.

AND *Lazarus*'s coming into ſuch meaſures with *Jeſus*, as Mr. *W.* ſuggeſts, is utterly improbable. He was an inhabitant of *Bethany*, near *Jeruſalem*, in no manner of alliance with *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, whoſe uſual reſidence was very remote from the place of his dwelling. He was in all probability, *a perfect ſtranger* to him, any farther than his *teaching*, and *mighty works*, recommended him to his eſteem and reſpect. No *other* good reaſon can be aſſigned for his friendſhip or diſcipleſhip. It is hugely improbable that he ſhould take *Jeſus* for a *juggler*, and much more that out of regard to his fame he ſhould come into ſuch meaſures as Mr. *W.*'s infidel ſuggeſts, who thus goes on; * *And whether he would not conſent to be interred in an hollow cave, where only a ſtone was laid at the mouth, as long*

B. Why ſh^d Lazarus aſſiſt a juggler?

* P. 29, 30.

as he could faſt, none of them will doubt. Is it not ſtrange, they ſhould make ſo many doubts of Chriſtianity, who are ſo much out of doubt here? *Four days was almoſt too long for a man to faſt without danger of health. But if the four days are numbered according to the arithmetick of* Jeſus's *three days in his grave, they are reducible to two* days *and* three nights. *Which time, if no victuals were ſecretly conveyed to him, a man might faſt in* Lazarus's *cave.* But we ſhall hear by and by, that *Lazarus* came out of his cave in grave-clothes, was there no danger to his health in being ſhut up two days and three nights in this equipage? and perhaps more in that warm than a colder climate. Or will infidels make no queſtion, but for the raiſing the fame of a *juggler*, he would riſque his health at this rate, and faſt three nights and two days, and lie all that while in his grave-clothes, in a cave. Let us ſee whether this be a *reaſonable thought*, which with them is *out of queſtion.*

Would or could Lazarus faſt ſo long?

WHAT could induce *Lazarus* to do this penance for a *known juggler*, that he might paſs upon the world for a *raiſer of the dead.* If *Jeſus* were ſuch a juggler, he muſt be a very wicked man: and *Lazarus*, on this ſuppoſition, muſt know him to be ſuch. Had he no *conſcience*, no fears from entering into ſuch a confederacy, and bearing a part in ſo *wicked* a cheat? Is it fair to ſuppoſe *Jeſus*'s diſciples ſuch a ſet of abandoned profligates? Is there any thing in their hiſtory to countenance ſuch a ſuppoſition? Would Mr. *W.* and his *infidels* take it well, to be paſſed on the world under ſo *vile* a *character*, and that at a venture, without any foundation; and that *chriſtians* ſhould have this *out* of *doubt?* But if he had any checks of conſcience, what ſhould baffle them? Would he, without any proſpect of advantage, from mere *blind attachment* to a wicked deceiver of mankind, break through theſe reſtraints? Nay, though he had no ſuch checks, would he act thus, without any ſuch proſpects? And what proſpect of advantage could he have? eſpecially at a time, when * *Jeſus* was in a remote, deſart country, to avoid the malice

* John x. 39, 40.

malice of the *Jews*; and his very coming into *Judea*, was, in his * diſciples account, offering himſelf to certain death. Is it likely the *timerous Lazarus*, who, if *he* is to be believed, † *skulked about the country for fear of his life, even after his reſurrection*, ſhould confederate with the ‖ *poor-ſpirited Jeſus*, in ſuch a ſcheme to raiſe his fame? If he had no conſcience, had he nothing *to loſe?* He had a life to loſe at leaſt. Is it likely that, at this juncture, he ſhould riſque it, and venture on a cheat, where the danger upon detection was ſo very great? And do ſuch penance to effect it? Or if himſelf, by ſuch *extravagant* friendſhip for a *known cheat*, were carried ſo much above his natural fears, would his *two ſiſters*, who muſt have their parts in this farce, have no miſgivings? or baffle theſe, and all their *female fears*, and be content not only that their *brother* ſhould run ſo great a riſque, but venture *themſelves* on the ſame danger? And this for a *cheat*, that could make them no compenſation in the world for ſuch an hazard? If infidels can admit this, *without queſtion*, they are very credulous on the ſide of infidelity.

Would Laz: risque his own reputation & life. So?

Would his 2 Siſters venture to concern in ye cheat?

AND muſt there not have been the *formalities* of a *death* and *burial* here? If ſo, all the ‡ improbabilities in the caſe of the *widow's ſon*, will here alſo recur. But if *Lazarus* walked to his cave, and his ſiſters there put on his grave-clothes, and bound his face in the napkin, and then cloſed him up; they muſt hereupon give out that he was dead and buried, no one knew *when* or *where*. Would the *Jews* have come from *Jeruſalem* to condole with them, on ſuch an unaccountable funeral? Nay, muſt not this have raiſed much ſuſpicion? Or were there no infidels as *ſagacious* as Mr. *W.* and *his* friends then in being? How utterly unlikely is that now, which with *his* infidels is *out of queſtion?* But he goes on.

Was not Lazarus known to be dead?

Could none have spyd ye cheat till Mr Woolſton?

As ** *to the ſtinking of the carcaſs, that infidels will ſay, is but the aſſertion of his ſiſter, like a* prologue *to a* farce: *None of the ſpectators ſay one word of his ſtinking*, &c. His infidels, *to be ſure*, will ſay after him, right or wrong. This is no aſſertion of hers in the *evangeliſt*; but

* John xi. 8. 16. † P. 16. ‖ P. 39. ‡ See p. 53. ſupra. ** P. 30.

but an inference from his having been ſo long either dead or buried, for the *Greek* is * myſtical. But take the expreſſion in either ſenſe, it was likely that he ſhould begin to putrefy by that time. And it looks ſo far from the *prologue* of a *farce*, a deſign to raiſe *Jeſus*'s fame, by a concerted *ſham-death*, that it ſpeaks her plain apprehenſion of her brother's death, and her *non-expectation* of his revival: eſpecially as connected, with what had paſſed between her and *Jeſus* before. At firſt meeting him, ſays ſhe, ** *Lord, hadſt thou been here, my brother had not died: but even now I know whatſoever thou ſhalt ask of God, God will give thee.* This laſt clauſe, indeed, intimates ſome hope in the caſe; but this ſoon fails. For when *Jeſus* tells her, *her brother ſhould be raiſed again*; ſhe replies, † *I know he ſhall be raiſed, in the reſurrection of the dead, at the laſt day.* Which ſpeaks very plainly her belief and expectation of a *general reſurrection*, but no expectation of his preſent revival, much leſs that ſhe had concerted a *ſham-death* with *Jeſus*, for an immediate reſurrection. *Jeſus* having hereupon told her, that ‖ *he was the reſurrection, and the life*, &c. and ‡ ſhe having profeſſed her faith in him *as the Chriſt*, occaſions a †‖ rebuke for her ſtarting this difficulty, when he was going to the cave. A difficulty naturally offering itſelf to a *doubting* mind, upon knowledge that her brother was dead, but very unnatural, in one who had concerted with *Jeſus*, a *ſham-death* and *reſurrection*.

The ſuſpicion of his ſhrinking very ill kind if Martha were a confederate in the plot.

NAY, had this been the caſe, this very *difficulty* muſt have detected the *ſham*. On opening the cave, it had been natural for all near it, to have expected this *token* of putrefaction. And had they been as ſagacious as Mr. *W.* had they not ſcented the carcaſs, they would have ſcented the ſham. And this needleſs difficulty, ſtarted by the *confederate*, had blown up all. Suppoſing the *truth* of the goſpel report, every thing is natural; but ſuppoſing it *a cheat*, this difficulty, eſpecially as timed, is moſt unnatural. What for a confederate

* τετραταῖος γὰρ ἐϛι. John xi. 39. ** Ver. 21, 22.
† Joh. xi. 24. ‖ Ver. 25. ‡ Ver. 27. †‖ Ver. 40.

federate juſt as the cave was to be opened, to ſuggeſt that he was already *ſtinking*, whom herſelf and *Jeſus* knew to be there alive! Could *a juggler* have the heart to proceed, after ſuch a blunder; and bid the cave be opened, to let out a *living man*, who could emit no ſcent of putrefaction *before*, nor leave any *behind* him? If this were a *prologue* to a *farce*, it muſt have laid the ſham naked, to the view of every by-ſtander, and ruined the reputation of *Jeſus*, not only for a *miracle-worker*, but even for a *juggler* too. So that this aſſertion, as he calls it, of the ſiſter, is no *ſhadow* of a reaſon for this miracle's being a *juggle*. And the *ſilence* of the *ſpectators*, concerning this ſcent, on which he lays ſuch a ſtreſs, is nothing more, than the omiſſion of a *needleſs paſſage* in a conciſe narration: a circumſtance of no weight nor importance in the ſtory. Nothing depended on the putrefaction of the carcaſs. It was the dead *Lazarus*, *Jeſus* came to raiſe, whether putrefied or not putrefied. But neither himſelf nor any there, had any concern whether the dead man *ſtank* or *no*.

* As *to the weepings and lamentations of* Jeſus *and the ſiſters*, infidels *will* ſay, *that was all ſham and counterfeit, the better to carry on the juggle of a feign'd reſurrection.* And we muſt believe it upon their ſaying it, and adding *to be ſure* to it. *Jeſus* and the *two ſiſters* had an art of counterfeiting tears, and *ſeeming* to weep when it was all ſham. Or are we to underſtand it of their ſhedding *real* tears, to counterfeit grief? They all, as well as the *widow*, had *tears at command*. They could weep at pleaſure, reaſon or no reaſon, *mirandum eſt unde ille oculis ſuffecerit humor*. This is a very likely thing, *infidels* will *ſay*, and believers on their *ſay-ſo*, will readily ſubſcribe to it, *to be ſure*. This was all *mock-mourning*. And ſo no doubt was the condolance of the *Jews*, though ſome of them appear in the *evangeliſt*, to be no friends to *Jeſus*. They came to lend aſſiſtance in carrying on the cheat. They were in the houſe with theſe ſiſters, many of them had likely been at the funeral (for *Lazarus* ſhutting himſelf up in the cave, is

W. B. Could the Sisters & Jesus weep at will & some of the Jews too?

* P. 30.

is highly improbable) theſe ſiſters muſt have been *extraordinary counterfeits*, if in theſe circumſtances, their *mock-mourning* could not be diſtinguiſhed from the *real* grief of ſiſters for a dead brother.

The Story it self makes it ſuſpicious void.

BUT the ſtory in the *evangeliſt* makes it very plain that *Lazarus* was indeed dead, and this grief was real and not counterfeit. *Lazarus* is firſt ſeized with ſickneſs. A meſſenger is ſent to *Jeſus*, then beyond *Jordan*, at ſome conſiderable diſtance from *Bethany*, to let him know it. Thither he had withdrawn himſelf from the malice of the *Jews*. But they hoped his friendſhip, on this meſſage, might, if he could come with any ſafety, bring him to ſee their ſick brother, and reſtore him. But when *Jeſus* came not, whilſt he was alive, his *revival* was unexpected by them. They did not ſo much as ſend him word of his death; for the † *diſciples* knew nothing of the matter, till *Jeſus* tells them of it; whereas ſuch a meſſage from the ſiſters, could not have been unknown to them: So little likelihood is there, that *Lazarus* ſhut himſelf up in the cave, or that his reſurrection was concerted. When *Jeſus* comes to *Bethany*, he comes unlooked for. The news of his coming is a ſurprize. Had he come upon invitation, it is not likely ‖ *Martha* ſhould ſtart upon hearing it, and be gone at once to meet him. It had been more decent to have waited, and received him at home, had he come by appointment. But his unexpected arrival ſprings a joy not to be reſiſted, and therefore ſhe runs away to meet him. The *addreſs* of both ſiſters to him, at ſome diſtance of time, is, **Lord, hadſt thou been here, our brother had not died.* How plainly does this addreſs, eſpecially in connection with *Martha*'s diſcourſe, ſignify a *non-expectation* of a revival? And how natural an addreſs is this to one of *Jeſus*'s character, a *prophet* and *worker of miracles*, ſuppoſing their brother *dead?* How unnatural to a *juggler*, with whom they had concerted to ſham the world, by fetching out of a cave, one whom they knew to be ſhut up there *alive?* The *Jews* preſent when *Mary* goes to meet

† John xi. 10—14. ‖ John xi. 20. * Ver. 21, 32.

meet *Jeſus*, * ſuſpect ſhe had *ſtolen away to the grave to weep there*, and on this ſuſpicion follow her. How artfully does ſhe play her part, that theſe *Jews* ſhould ſo much miſtake *counterfeit* for *real* grief? When ſhe meets *Jeſus*, ſhe throws herſelf all in tears at his feet, and addreſſes him as above: the *Jews* are ſo affected with her tears, and ſorrowful caſe, as to † *weep with her*. Is it natural to ſuppoſe, a grief thus circumſtanced to be grief for a *dead brother*, or one ſhe knew to be *living*, and only ſhut up in a cave, to impoſe a *ſham miracle* on the world? One would think, that if they had concerted ſuch an impoſture with *Jeſus*, they ſhould rather have wiped up their tears at his arrival, and been calm, at leaſt, if not joyous, at what was to follow, without ſtarting any difficulties.

BUT *Jeſus*'s tears, which are here made ſo fit to carry on the *juggle*, in a few ‖ pages, are an huge abſurdity in a *miracle-worker*. Is not this mighty conſiſtent? How comes it about, that theſe tears of *Jeſus*, were ſo fit to put the *better* face on his juggling deſign, and yet ſuch an abſurdity in the miracle-worker? Was it not the intention of the *juggler* to be famed for a *miracle-worker*, and yet be ſo abſurd as to ſhed tears for one, he, in appearance, was to raiſe from the dead? I cannot ſee but, according to Mr. *W.* it had been impoſſible for *Jeſus* to weep. He could not naturally weep for the death of one, whom he knew to be alive. And to counterfeit tears, was to forget his *aſſumed character*. Or elſe he did not underſtand the *juggling character*, as well as Mr. *W.* for ſure he did not ſtand at *Lazarus*'s cave in the character of a *juggler*, but a *miracle-worker*; in whom, if Mr. *W.* knows, tears would have been an arrant abſurdity. And *Jeſus*, in his account, muſt be as very a bungler at juggling, as Mr. *W.* appears by this time at reaſoning.

HE tells us, ‡ Lazarus *was not long enough dead and buried, to leave no room to doubt of the* miracle *of his reſurrection*. If he means *reaſonably* to doubt, this is left to the reader's judgment; if he means for infidels

* Ver. 31. † Ver. 33. ‖ P. 39. ‡ P. 31.

to doubt, who, according to his repreſentation, can ſay, and affirm, and doubt, and queſtion, *right* or *wrong*, *with* reaſon, or *without* it, little regard is to be had to them. If they have no room, they'll make it.

His ſaying, † *If* Jeſus *could raiſe the dead, he might have made choice of other perſons more unqueſtionably dead, who had lain longer in their graves, and were in a viſible ſtate of putrefaction*, is meer talk. To thoſe who ſaw theſe perſons raiſed, and knew them to be *unqueſtionably* dead, none could be *more* unqueſtionably ſo. And if the preſent reporters are not to be believed, who tell us thoſe whom *Jeſus* raiſed were unqueſtionably dead, would they have deſerved more credit for telling us he raiſed thoſe who were in a *ſtate of viſible putrefaction*, even though they added, *that they were* ‖ *perſons nominated by magiſtrates of ſuch a city, and before multitudes who beheld the putrefied bodies, and ſaw them recover their priſtine form?* Could he have ſtarted no *may-be's* in this caſe, which *his* infidels would ſay were *out of doubt*, nor to be *called in queſtion?* As "*May-be* "theſe were not putrefied bodies, but coloured with "paint, and ſcented with carrion. *May-be* the ma- "giſtrates were in concert with *Jeſus*, to ſham the "world with a counterfeit miracle. *May-be* the mul- "titude preſent were *confederates*, or there were none "elſe there but the *vulgar*, who only could ſtare and "wonder, but had nor heads nor hearts to examine "into a *juggler's tricks*. However the *reporters* were "all *Jeſus's* diſciples, *who*, to be ſure, *would come into* "*any meaſures, right or wrong, to raiſe their maſter's* "*fame:* and by telling ſuch a ſtory, they appear no "*bunglers* in *biography*, but artful fellows, well-skill'd "even in the critique of the hiſtory of *heroes.*" And then 'tis but to add, "infidels, who take *chriſtianity* "for impoſture, will call none of this into queſtion, but "admit theſe *may-be's* for *undoubted facts:*" and then even ſuch a miracle deſerves as little credit, as others now on record. If theſe *reporters* are not to be believed, who tell us thoſe were *unqueſtionably* dead whom *Jeſus*

Conclusion. Not any sort of circumſtances w. ſoever are ſecure from W.s *May-bees*.

† P. 31. ‖ Ibid.

Jeſus raiſed, nor muſt we have believed them, if they had made report of his raiſing others, in Mr. *W*'s account, *more* unqueſtionably dead. It is upon the *unqueſtionable* credit of the hiſtorian, that the *unqueſtionable* faith of the fact muſt reſt. If the fact be in *itſelf* probable, or even poſſible, and the reporter be well informed, and honeſt in his report, the *truth* of the fact is not to be queſtioned. What in itſelf *might be*, and is thus credibly reported to *have* been, is not to be called in queſtion, for the ſake of any *may-be's* elſe whatever.

§. V. *Mr.* W's Fifth Remark *conſidered.*

BUT, ſays Mr. *W.* † *None of theſe perſons did or could tell any tales of the ſeparate exiſtence of their ſouls.* How does he know? Why, *otherwiſe the* Evangeliſts *had not been ſilent in this* main point, *which is of the* eſſence *of* Chriſtianity? What is this *main point eſſential* to Chriſtianity? The knowledge of the *particular ſtate* of ſouls, during their ſeparation from the body? Who has made this ſo *main* and *eſſential* a part of Chriſtianity? I never met with a chriſtian, who thought it any *branch* of chriſtianity, eſſential or non-eſſential. About it, chriſtian revelation is ſilent. So that the ‖ *dilemma* to which *divines are reduced*, by this thought of his, *either to deny the ſeparate exiſtence of ſouls, or the precedent deaths of theſe raiſed perſons*, is nothing but preſumptuous talk, as uſual. Muſt the ſeparate exiſtence of ſouls be denied, then, unleſs we know *where* they are, *what* they do, and *how* they live and act? What *credulous fools* have chriſtians in all ages been, to believe the exiſtence of ſeparate ſouls, without this knowledge? Since God has thought fit to conceal this from them, if Mr. *W.* and infidels reaſon right, they ſhould have denied the truth of what he has revealed. How * *incompatible, now, muſt the belief of theſe perſons reſurrection be, with the chriſtian belief, of the ſeparate exiſtence of ſouls?*

W. None of them told of their Separate State

B.

† P. 32. ‖ Ibid. * Ibid.

BUT * *was any perſon in this age, who had been any time dead, to be raiſed to life, the firſt thing his friends and acquaintance would enquire of him, would be, where his ſoul had been, and in what* company, *and* how *it had fared with him; and hiſtorians would certainly record his narrative.* But what if he made none, would they then record it? Not if they were *true* and *faithful* hiſtorians: and 'tis very probable this was the caſe. But if not, muſt the *evangeliſts* do, as all *other* hiſtorians would? For what reaſon? Why † *the ſame curioſity could not but poſſeſs people of old, as does now. And if the raiſed perſons had told any ſuch ſtories, the Evangeliſts* unqueſtionably *would have reported them.* What from the ſame *curioſity?* But what if they thought this a *vain,* and perhaps a *faulty* curioſity? Would they have humoured it in *themſelves* or *others?* Without doubt they would not. This was the caſe, and he is *unqueſtionably* wrong.

BUT, ‖ *ſuch a report would not only have been a* confirmation *of a doctrine, which is of the* eſſence *of our religion, but an* abſolute confutation *of the* Sadducees *and* Scepticks *of that age, and* Materialiſts *of this.* But the *evidence* of this doctrine has nothing to do with ſuch a report. The doctrines of a *judgment to come,* of *future recompences,* and the *exiſtence* of *ſouls departed,* are in the general plainly revealed in ſcripture. Had a more particular knowledge been neceſſary, a more particular account had been there given. The credit of theſe doctrines reſt on that of *Jeſus* and his *Apoſtles,* whoſe divine authority have been made out, as chriſtians think, by *many, clear* and *inconteſtable* proofs. What additional confirmation can the report of *one from the dead* give to this? Can chriſtians give more credit to ſuch a reporter, than to *Jeſus* and his *Apoſtles?* Or have a *firmer* faith in a doctrine, received on *their* authority, for the ſake of this *farther* authority? Or would infidels, whether ancient *Sadducees* and *Scepticks,* or modern *Materialiſts,* who disbelieve all the doctrines and facts of chriſtianity beſides, have come into the belief of

* P. 32. † P. 33. ‖ Ibid.

of them, for the ſake of *theſe reports?* Would not Mr. *W.* have made himſelf merry with theſe tales of an *inſignificant boy and girl*, and an *obſcure* and *inconſiderable Lazarus?* The *Evangeliſts* knew, that were ſuch reports inſerted, it could anſwer no end, but gratifying *curioſity*; and therefore if they did make *any* reports, they wiſely omitted them; though for the ſame good reaſon, it is very likely, they made none.

I ſee not therefore, that this * *ſilence of the* Evangeliſts *is of any bad conſequence either to the* doctrine, *or the* miracles. Why ſhould it? *Muſt we not* almoſt *neceſſarily hereupon hold, that theſe raiſed perſons were not dead, or their ſouls died with them?* The *modeſty* of the man, in this paſſage, is ſingular. It is not to be matched in the whole piece. Almoſt *neceſſarily!* It ſhould have been neceſſarily at leaſt, to be of a piece with the reſt. But I cannot ſee that it is ſo much as *almoſt neceſſary*, to admit either of theſe two conſequences. They were certainly dead, and as certainly revived. In what *ſtate* or *region* their ſouls were, between their death and revival, has nothing to do with the *miracle*. Nor was their making any report where they had been, or in *what ſtate* or *company*, *needful* to the knowing whether they were dead and revived. Thoſe who ſaw them dead and reſtored to life, knew the miraculous change, *without* any ſuch reports; and knew hereupon, that *Jeſus* had *divine powers*, and was a *prophet*, and therefore that his *doctrines*, and this of the ſeparate exiſtence of ſouls among the reſt, deſerved all credit and regard.

THE † *apocryphal ſtory* of *Lazarus*'s having been in hell, may afford ſome merriment to his infidels; but has nothing to do with the argument. It proves, indeed, his great luſt to be laughing, though at his own impertinence. And his talk of *Lazarus*'s ‡ *ſoul being fetched from paradiſe, is equally* trifling. Had this been the caſe, *Lazarus* would readily have come back into life, at the command of God and call of *Jeſus*, and have expoſed himſelf to all the miſeries of it, and could,

* P. 33. † P. 33, 34. ‡ P. 34.

could, and would have been abundantly recompenſed for it at laſt.

BUT this ‖ ridiculous jeſt, about his *having been in a bad place, or elſe he had not abſconded after his reſurrection, for fear of the* Jews, *as if he was afraid to go back to the place whence he came*; argues him a very *careleſs* or a very *diſhoneſt* writer. The evangelical ſtory ſays nothing of *Lazarus*'s abſconding at all. So that this is a mere ſlanderous invention, for the ſake of a poor jeſt, on ſo tremendous a ſubject as hell.

THE reſt of his talk, * *where the ſouls of theſe dead perſons were*, I paſs over as trifling. It has nothing to do with the argument. If it might be known that the perſons were dead, and made alive again, and this is reported by *proper witneſſes*, it is all on which the credit of any fact, to which ourſelves are not *eye* or *ear-witneſſes*, can depend. This reaſon chriſtians have to believe theſe facts; and for this reaſon do believe them, without concerning themſelves, *where* their ſouls were, between their *death* and *revival*, or in *what ſtate*. And Mr. *W.* might have as reaſonably told us, that we muſt not believe *they had ſouls*, becauſe upon coming back into life, they did not tell us *what* they are; as ſay their ſouls died with them, becauſe they did not tell *where* they had been.

Tis very probable that entering into union with body again their State of ſeparation was not remembered, as having no hauts in the Brain, the corporall organs of memory.

§. VI. *Mr.* W's Sixth Remark *conſidered.*

WE come now to the *intrinſick abſurdities*, as he calls them, of theſe relations. And if there be any ſuch, they are to his purpoſe; all the reſt is *flouriſh*.

W.

HE begins with the ſtory of *Jairus*'s daughter. And here he makes *Hilary* hint, that *there was no ſuch perſon as* Jairus; *that the name is* fictitious, *and coined for the ſake of the* parable. Suppoſe this to be fact, (though I cannot truſt his quotations) and that *Hilary* has given ſuch an hint; is this a reaſon why we ſhould believe it? None at all. But he ſuppotrs this hint with a *good reaſon*. What is this? It is † *elſewhere intimated*

Jairus a meer fictitious Name

‖ P. 34. * P. 36. † Ibid.

timated in the goſpel, that none of the rulers *of the* ſynagogue confeſſedly *believed on* Jeſus. But perhaps this is only ſaid, if it be ſaid, for the ſake of a *parable*. And then it carries no hint of a contradiction to the ſtory before us. But the goſpel-hiſtory muſt be *allegory* or *ſtory*, as will beſt fit Mr. *W*'s purpoſe: and one of his taſte, may, at this rate, make *any thing* or *nothing* of it.

I cannot but obſerve too, that the reaſon in *Hilary*, according to his own citation, is not that of Mr. *W*. In *Hilary* it is, †*Nam nullum principem credidiſſe legimus.* For we read, that no *ruler* believed. To which Mr. *W*. foiſts in *confeſſedly*. So that *Hilary*'s reaſon was not a *good one*, without Mr. *W*'s amendment. And one of the texts referred to by Mr. *W*. directly contradicts what *Hilary*, as he cites him, ſays. For the text ſays expreſsly, that ‡ *many of the rulers believed on him, but becauſe of the Phariſees, they did not confeſs it.* Is not this now a plain, evident reaſon, that *Jairus* is a fictitious name, and that really there was no ſuch perſon. Why, becauſe *Hilary* ſays we read *that none of the rulers believed on him.* Yes, ſays St. *John*, *many of the rulers believed on him.* Ay, but they *did not confeſs it.* What then? Why then 'tis as clear as day-light, there was no ſuch man as *Jairus*. But might not *Jairus* come to *Jeſus* for the cure of a dying child, without having confeſſed he was the *Chriſt*. If he might, then, this reading notwithſtanding, there might be ſuch a man as *Jairus*. B.

IN the other text, to which he refers us, it is ſaid, ‖ *Have any of the Rulers or Phariſees believed on him?* In both texts it is ἀρχόντες *rulers*, not ἀρχισυνάγωγοι *rulers of ſynagogues*. So far his citation is unfair. But ſuppoſing the more general term ἄρχων *ruler*, to include the more reſtrained ἀρχισυνάγωγος *ruler of a ſynagogue*; yet we do not read in the *Evangeliſt*, that *none of the rulers believed on him.* This is only a ſaying of *Jeſus*'s enemies, which the Evangeliſt honeſtly reports, but without any hint, whether it were true or falſe. But W. B.

it

† P. 36. ‡ John xii. 42. ‖ Chap. vii. 48.

it is an *angry saying*, on the officers giving this reason, for not *seizing* him, * *that never man spake like him.* And a saying, with this spiteful one tacked to it, *But this people* (or † *mob*) *who knoweth not the law, are cursed.* Is it likely that those, who in the *close* of their say, could pass so bitter and contemptuous a censure, on so great a body of their own people, should pay such sacred regard to truth, as not to stretch a little in the *beginning?* And is this spiteful saying of *Jesus*'s enemies, in a *fit* of *passion*, a *good* authority for saying *we read no ruler believed on him?* Or can it be a *good reason* that there was no such person as *Jairus*, but that it is a *fictitious name?* And is not this, after all, an evident *intrinsick note* of absurdity and incredibility in the story?

W. Why did Jesus say She was asleep. B.

But, ‡ *Why did* Jesus *say, the girl was but in a sleep? When he was going to work a miracle in her resurrection, he should not have called death, sleep.* Is this argument against christians, or mocking, senseless, and illiterate infidels? Is not the resemblance between *sleep* and *death* so obvious, that in the language of *philosophers* as well as *poets*, one is often put for the other? Does not *Tully* the *philosopher* say, ‖ *Quid melius quam in mediis vitæ laboribus* obdormiscere, *& ita conniventes somno consopiri* sempiterno? Is not *sleeping* here, *dying*, and *death* an *endless sleep?* And why might not *Jesus* talk of death, in the same language? No, *he should not have called death sleep, when he was going to work a miracle in the girl's resuscitation.* But to me it looks that, in this very view, he does it with great *propriety* and *elegance.* If *Cicero* calls death, from whence he expected no revival, *somnus sempiternus*, as properly, at least, does *Jesus* call death for a time, *somnus, sleep.* It was rather a sleep than death, because both *vital* and *animal* functions were soon to be called back into exercise, as the *animal* ones are on awaking after a temporal cessation in sleep.

W & Lazarus asleep.

And the story of *Lazarus*'s revival, makes this out to be his plain meaning here. When the message of his

* John vii. 46. † ὄχλος. v. 49. ‡ P. 36. vid. p. 48. supra, ‖ Tuscul. I.

his ſickneſs is brought him, he tells his diſciples * *this ſickneſs is not unto death.* By this he could not mean, he would not die. For, in his way to *Jeruſalem*, he tells his diſciples, † Lazarus *our friend is aſleep, but I am going to awake him.* But when they reply to this, ‡ *If he ſleep he will do well*, he plainly tells them, ‖ *he is dead.* And the *† *Evangeliſt* remarks, in a *parentheſis*, that in this *metaphor* he ſpake of dying and death, though they underſtood him *without a figure*, of *taking reſt by ſleep.* So *Lazarus*'s ſickneſs was not unto death, in the common acceptation of the word. From ſuch death there is no revival, till the general reſurrection. He was rather aſleep than dead, ſince it was his purpoſe ſoon to revive him. The ſame is the manifeſt reaſon of the language here. B.

BUT Mr. *W.* goes on, *‖ *If others had been of a contrary opinion.* To what? To that of her being aſleep; to his, as Mr. *W.* repreſents it. What then? *He ſhould have convinced them of the certainty of her death, before he did the great work on her.* That is, of what they were convinced already. One would think Mr. *W.* had been here *aſleep.* But let us ſuppoſe, he means by thoſe of a *contrary* opinion, thoſe of the *ſame* opinion, that ſhe was only aſleep. *If any ſuch were here, he ſhould have convinced them?* But it is plain there were none ſuch here. For all there, miſtaking his meaning, as Mr. *W.* pretends to do, ** *laughed him to ſcorn.* Why? For ſaying ſhe was but aſleep, when they *knew ſhe was dead.* And, *to be ſure*, Mr. *W.* had he been there, would have joined in the laugh, as he here endeavours to make *Jeſus ridiculouſly ſilly*, in the character either of a *juggler* or *miracle-worker*; who when his buſineſs was to do *juſtice to his fame*, as a *raiſer of the dead*, ſets himſelf to perſuade the people, one he was about to raiſe, was not dead, but aſleep only. This is a very *natural* account of things, is it not? If his *parabolick* interpretations are as wiſe as his *literal* ones, he will make infidels merry indeed. W. B.

* John xi. 4. † Ver. 11. πεφιλύομαι. ‡ Ver. 12. ‖ Ver. 14.
*† Ver. 13. *‖ P. 37. ** Luke viii. 53.

W

Why was ſuch a miracle forbidden to be publiſhed.

B.

BUT, * *Why did he charge the parents of the girl, not to ſpeak of the miracle? If he meant it as a teſtimony of his divine power, he ſhould rather in juſtice to himſelf, have exhorted them to publiſh it, and make it well known.* He certainly meant it as a teſtimony of his *divine power*. But why, *in juſtice to himſelf, muſt he exhort the parents to publiſh it?* That he might not loſe the fame of it. I cannot doubt, but an *itch* to be *famous*, might prompt Mr. *W.* to publiſh his *ludicrous* diſcourſes, on the *miracles* of our *Saviour*, and diſtinguiſh himſelf from every other *T. W.* by annexing B. D. *ſometime fellow*, &c. to his name. It is reported that *one fellow* was ſo greedy of fame, as to fire *Diana*'s temple to become renowned. But the meek and lowly *Jeſus* acts as becomes himſelf, when he ſhews no concern to do *himſelf juſtice* this way. He is content to do the works, and leave them to ſpread his fame. This work could not be concealed. The *witneſſes* were too many. The *multitude*, who attended *Jeſus* to the houſe; the *croud* turned out by him, who knew the girl was dead, and 'tis likely, told how ridiculouſly, as they thought, *Jeſus* talked concerning her; many, no doubt, ſtaid to know the event: The neighbours who knew the *girl* was *dead*, and ſaw her afterward *alive*, muſt all know the miraculous change, and *Jeſus*'s concern in it. And how then ſhould it be concealed? † *The fame of it was ſoon ſpread over all that country.* It was needleſs therefore *in juſtice to himſelf*, to exhort to ſuch publication.

BUT *why then did he charge the parents of the girl, not to ſpeak of it?* Not to *aggrandize his fame* for a miracle-worker, which, if we may believe Mr. *W.* was the grand deſign of his *Evangeliſts*. But when others would publiſh it, why muſt the *parents be ſilent?* I ſuppoſe this was a charge in common to ‖ his diſciples as well as the *parents*, who it is likely became his diſciples too. And he would have none of thoſe forward to publiſh it, and that in *juſtice to himſelf too*, that he might not appear to affect popularity, to ſeek fame,

or

* P. 37. † Mat. ix. 26. ‖ Mark v. 43.

or endeavour to make himſelf great. As alſo to ſet an example of *humility* to his diſciples, and that they ſhould be much more concerned to *do* good and *be* good, than to make ſuch *an appearance*. Nor is it unlikely that *kindneſs* to the *ruler* himſelf, might have a ſhare in it, to reſtrain him from what gratitude and wonder might prompt him to do, and *the doing* might render him obnoxious to others of the ſame rank, few of which, Mr. *W.* has told us, were friends to *Jeſus*. But whatever were the reaſon, there could be no meaning in it prejudicial to the miracle, or Mr. *W*'s unlucky invention, *to be ſure*, had hit it off.

W.

B.

BUT, * *Why did he turn the people out of doors, before he would raiſe her? The more* witneſſes *are preſent at a miracle, the better it is atteſted, and the more readily believed by others. And who ſhould have been preſent at the miracle, rather than thoſe, who were* incredulous *of* Jeſus's divine powers? But who were the people turned out, but the pipers and their wailing tribe? Had they been preſent, would Mr. *W.* have thought the miracle better atteſted? Does he not *equally* attack the credit of theſe three miracles, without any regard to the numbers preſent? Would he not have thought *half a dozen*, as ſagacious as himſelf, much better atteſters to the truth of *Jeſus*'s miracles, than all the multitudes who ſaw them? But, *who ſhould be preſent at the miracle, rather than thoſe, who were* incredulous *of* Jeſus's divine powers? Does Mr. *W.* know any ſuch were preſent and excluded? It does not appear any ſuch were there. Muſt *Jeſus* have waited till ſome were ſent for? Were none but theſe, *capable* judges? Or were they the moſt *unprejudiced* ones? Let thoſe, who have read Mr. *W*'s judicious critique on our Saviour's miracles, judge.

HERE were the *parents* of the girl, who muſt know whether their child was *living* or *dead*. Here were *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, three of his Apoſtles, who upon being admitted into the room where ſhe lay, could eaſily ſee if there were ſigns of death, and eaſily know

* P. 37.

if ſhe were dead or no. They were all *capable* witneſſes, had *fairer* opportunity to make a judgment, and obſerve *all circumſtances*, than any could have had, in a promiſcuous croud in a cloſe *room*. And theſe *Apoſtles* were of chief rank, and among the moſt forward in ſpreading their maſter's *hated religion* afterward. Can it be thought, that, in defiance of every humane appetite, but meer *thirſt* for *fame*, they could have ſhewn this zeal for one they knew to be a *deceiver*, and all his pretended wonders meer *juggling cheats*? That without any proſpect of worldly advantage, of *honour* or *eſtate*; nay, with proſpect of encountering the *rage* of the people, and *wrath* of all the great men, in a manner, of the world, they ſhould go about and propagate a religion, ſo plainly prohibiting all *fraud* and *deceit*, and every other *wickedneſs*, and this in the *name* of *Jeſus*, without the firmeſt aſſurance of his having wrought *real* miracles, and being endued with divine powers, is, as his *Rabbi* ſays in another caſe, *impoſſible* to be believed. And had more people been there, and among theſe the *incredulous*, and had the *Evangeliſts* told us, theſe had gone away convinced, could we have any farther evidence of the fact, than we now have in the *Evangeliſts* report? Muſt not all have reſted on the foot of their teſtimony? Till that be proved to be not worthy regard, all endeavours elſe to diſcredit the ſtory they tell us, are but trifling. And it is ſo far from *being either* * folly *or* nonſenſe, *to talk of a miracle in this caſe*, that it is ſomewhat *much worſe* than either, to talk againſt it. But when he adds, *againſt* Jeſus's *expreſs* word *and* prohibition, the reader muſt be aſtoniſhed, but that by this time he knows the man.

NB. Had all & particulars in all those miracles been just as W. would have them, we must still have rested on the Credit of the Evangelists for the truth of them: & why not without these particulars?

As to the † *widow* of *Naïm*'s ſon, he has no more to ſay, than he has ſaid; but *that is enough*, if you'll take his word, *to overthrow the credibility of the miracle*; and I leave this to the readers judgment. But what are become of thoſe ‖ *intrinſick notes of abſurdity to be hereafter mentioned*, with which biſhop *Smalbroke* is inſulted, by this mannerly and modeſt man?

BUT

* P. 37. † Ibid. ‖ P. 13.

BUT for that he is ſo ſparing here, we ſhall have large amends in his *remarks* on the ſtory of *Lazarus*, which, it ſeems, is * *brimfull of abſurdities, that remarks on all, would fill a* volume. *And had not St.* John *outlived his ſenſes, he could not have committed them.* This ſtory *is ſuch a contexture of* folly *and* fraud, *in its* contrivance, execution, *and* relation, *as is not to be equalled in all romantic hiſtory.* But for the evidence of this *modeſt hyperbole*, we muſt wait till hereafter. At preſent we muſt reſt content with *four*, out of the monſtrous heap, and theſe, to make the more of them, eked out by *repetitions* too.

Concerning Lazarus.

FIRST then, † *Obſerve*, ſays he, Jeſus *is ſaid to have wept and groaned for the death of* Lazarus. *But why ſo, ſays St.* Baſil? But whatever St. *Baſil* ſays, I deſire Mr. *W.* would ſhew us where St. *John* ſays this? It is *twice* ſaid, indeed, that *Jeſus* groaned. When he ſaw *Mary* in tears, and the *Jews* weeping with her, it is ſaid, ‖ *he groaned in ſpirit, and was troubled.* And a ſecond time, that he groaned, when the *Jews ſaid* ‡, *Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have cauſed that this man ſhould not have died?* And *once* to have ** *wept*, when called upon to ſee where *Lazarus* lay. If the *Jews* preſent, thought theſe tears the effect of his *† love to *Lazarus*, the ſuppoſition was natural, but might be a *miſtake.* And other motives might give riſe to theſe tears, which lay out of their reach. But Mr. *W.* ſhould not tell us, that *is ſaid* which is *not ſaid*, and then go on to ask queſtions on his *own* ſuppoſals.

VV. 1st Why did Jesus weep for Laz.

B.

AND other conſiderations ariſing out of the circumſtances, might occaſion theſe tears and groans, not the death of *Lazarus.* *Mary* and *Martha* ſhew much diſtruſt of his power and good-will. This might occaſion them. It is elſewhere ſaid, *‖ *he was grieved at the hardneſs of heart* (or ſtubborn unbelief) *the Jews* diſcovered, and *looked round with anger on them.* Hardneſs of heart in his diſciſples, muſt be more grievous to him;

Perhaps not for Laz:

* P. 38. † Ibid. ‖ John xi. 33. ‡ Ver. 37, 38. ** Ver. 34, 35. *† Ver. 36. *‖ Mar. iii. 5.

him; but as a *frowning look* had not been ſo natural in their caſe, where *weakneſs*, not *wilfulneſs*, was the chief cauſe of unbelief, eſpecially when they were in ſuch *diſtreſs* as well as doubt, his grief naturally vents itſelf in *groans* and *tears*. The incredulity of the *Jews* there preſent, might contribute alſo to his grief. His ſecond groaning is upon their ſaying, *could not this man*, &c. which, though it implies ſome faint perſuaſion, that it was in his power, to have prevented *Lazarus*'s death, had he come in time, carries manifeſt doubt in it, of his reviving power. And this after he had enquired, where *Lazarus* was laid. Which, if he ſignified his purpoſe no other way, muſt have intimated it to them. For they could not reaſonably think, he made this enquiry meerly to ſee his *place* of *burial*, or to have it opened, that he might look in upon *him*. And the incredulity of the *Jews* preſent, might bring to his mind that of the people in general; and his *own* death approaching, when by their final unbelief and rejection of him, they would *fill up the meaſure of their ſins*, their approaching *calamities* might preſent themſelves to his view, and very deeply touch his *tender* and *compaſſionate* heart: As we find he *wept* when he *beheld* the city. *Luke* xix. 41. All theſe thoughts naturally, and by a quick tranſition, ariſe out of the circumſtances. And Mr. *W.* has therefore no right to ſuppoſe, the death of *Lazarus* was the occaſion of his tears, and much leſs the *ſole occaſion*.

B. BUT admit, that, in ſome reſpect, the death of *Lazarus his friend*, was the occaſion of both. What then? † *Was it not abſurdity in him to weep at all, for the death of one, whom he could, and was about to recover to life?* Even *as much as for a man to grieve for the abſence of a friend, whoſe company he can retrieve in an inſtant.* Suppoſe this an abſurdity in ſuch a man, whilſt *by himſelf*; yet when many are *about him*, to whom the abſence of *this friend* is more grievous than to him, who know nothing of this power of *his*, or at that time *advert* not to it; and are faulty too for this non-

† P. 39.

non-attention, and who think his preſence *irretrievable*, and are hereupon all drowned in tears, might not this diſtreſs of *theirs* wring *groans* from the breaſt, and *tears* from the eyes of a *tender ſympathizing friend?* Even though he knew his own power and purpoſe to call him into their preſence, for their common joy and comfort? Where humanity is in any breaſt to an *eminent degree*, is not ſuch a *ſcene of ſorrow* catching? Is Mr. *W.* ſure he could on ſuch an occaſion controul himſelf? If he be, I ſhall not make it an evidence, that he *exceeds* in common pity or good-nature. I am pretty ſure he would join in a *laugh* on an occaſion much *leſs proper*. *Jeſus* therefore, who had much compaſſion, as his office of a *Saviour* required, though he *knew his power and purpoſe*, &c. might weep with his own friends, and the near relations of the dead, without acting *out of* character, or being guilty of any *abſurdity* in conduct.

BUT, *If he* † *could not or would not raiſe him, he ought not, as a philoſopher, (who knows,* man is born to die) *to betray ſo much weakneſs, as to weep for his dead friend.* Certainly it is no reproach to *Jeſus*, that, on ſo poor a conſideration, he did not refrain tears. He who had no better reaſons to comfort himſelf, on the death of a child, than *genui mortalem, I begot him mortal*, did wiſely, perhaps, in making the beſt uſe he could *of this*, to moderate his grief. But he who conſiders death as the *penal conſequence* of *ſin*, and an *inlet* into eternity, and looks on the death of a good man as an *important loſs*, to his family and the world, will find but *poor relief* from this *philoſophical* conſideration. *Jeſus* had much more powerful conſiderations to ſtop the guſh of his tears. He is very calm when he firſt communicates the news of *Lazarus*'s death to his diſciples, and tells them he was going to revive him. He came to *Bethany* for this end, and certainly knew his own intention and power. Yet the *moving ſcene* before him, the little faith and great grief of the *two ſiſters*, with other conſiderations, might excite a compaſſion, that

† P. 39.

would vent itſelf both in *groans* and *tears*, without derogating from his *philoſophy* or *diviner principles*. This proved him a man, *one who* * *could be touched with the feeling of humane infirmities*, tho' he came to bring them relief. This I cannot think his *reproach*. No man who ſaw a *phyſician* drop tears, over a patient in agony and danger, while the compaſſion ſtirring in his breaſt, gave no obſtruction to his proceeding for the patient's relief; would reaſonably judge him to act unbecoming his *manhood* or *profeſſion*, but rather that he ſhewed himſelf an artiſt, of great humanity and generous compaſſion. And thoſe who look on *Jeſus* as their *Saviour*, and know how much *they need* his compaſſionate regard to *their infirmities*, will be very thankful to meet with theſe *inſtances* of his tenderneſs, in the evangelical ſtory, however croſs they may run to the *philoſophical* character, in Mr. *W*'s notion of it.

But, † *patience and reſignation to the will of God on the death of friends, is what all* philoſophers *have rightly taught. To be ſure* Mr. *W.* is as well acquainted with all the *philoſophers*, as all the *judicious criticks* in the univerſe. Admit it. What then? *And* Jeſus, *one would think, ſhould have been the moſt heroical example of theſe graces. And how came he to fail of it here? A* Stoical apathy *had better become him, than ſuch childiſh and effeminate grief, which not only makes him a mean and poor-ſpirited mortal; but*—What? The ſame thing over again, which began the paragraph; is an *abſurdity*, and now it is a *groſs one*, and *incredibility* into the bargain, *becauſe he had power and will to fetch him to life.*

Was ever ſuch ſtuff obtruded on the world, for argument, and that with ſuch arrogance, before? What *his* philoſophers have taught concerning *patience* and *reſignation* to God, is not worth while to enquire. But patience *without* pain, and reſignation to God *without* reluctance to the event, have the appearance of *inconſiſtencies*. If *his* philoſophers teach *ſuch* patience and reſignation, they are fit maſters for ſuch a ſcholar. That is patience, that is willing to *endure* pain, though it

* Heb. iv. 15. † P. 39.

it extort tears and groans: and *that* is reſignation, in which reluctance againſt the diſpleaſing event, is *maſtered* by a ſubmiſſion to the divine will: but to *bear* what a man does not *feel*, is *not* patience, but inſenſibility. Or in other words, it is *not* to endure pain, but not to feel it. And reſignation to the will of God, where there is *no ſenſe*, nor *dread* of evil, *no reſiſtency* againſt it, is *not* reſignation to the will of God, but a *ſtupid unconcern* whether God's will be done or no, whilſt the man has no will of *his own*, to reluct againſt, or ſubmit to it, to *counter-act*, or *fall in with* it.

JESUS was indeed the moſt *glorious example* of patience and reſignation that ever was in the world. I can ſhew him ſuch an inſtance of both in his conduct, which no *philoſophy* in the world could ever reach, no *philoſopher* ever parallel; and that, not *heroical* and *romantick*; but *real*, *religious* and *divine*, without any ſpice of *Stoical apathy*. When a little before his death and ſufferings, and with theſe in full view, he prayed in the garden; the proſpect ſo affected him, that he was * *ſorrowful*, † *amazed*, and in ‖ *grievous anguiſh*, as the Evangeliſts expreſs it. ‡ *His ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even to death*, as himſelf expreſſes it. He could hardly live under it. Yet in all this ſorrow, diſtreſs and anguiſh he prays, *‖ *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me: Neverthleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* *† *If this cup may not paſs from me, unleſs I drink it, thy will be done.* ** *If thou be willing, remove this cup from me: neverthleſs, not my will, but thine be done.* Here is *patience* and *reſignation:* Here is the moſt *pungent*, almoſt *oppreſſive* ſenſe of expected evil; *nature* reluctting againſt the bitter potion. Yet the inclinations of nature not only *reſiſted* but *ſubdued*, and all the counter-tendencies of it, ſubmiſſively yielded up to his father's pleaſure. Here is a *perſevering firmneſs* to meet all this evil, ſo painful in expectation, out of obedience to the divine will. His is not a ſoul *inſenſible*, but having the *quickeſt* ſenſations of pain, and

* λυπεῖσθαι. Mat. xxvi. 31. † ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι. Mar. xiv. 33.
‖ ἀδημονεῖν. ibid. ‡ Mat. xxvi. 38. *‖ Ver. 39. *† Ver. 42.
** Luk. xxii. 42.

ſtrong averſions to it, and yet his *divine principles* make him patient, that is, willing to undergo and endure it. *Reaſon* and *religious* deference and duty, overpower all theſe natural averſions to ſuffering, and bring him to *acquieſce* in his father's will.

How much ſuperior is this to *Stoical apathy?* Patience under the *ſharpeſt* ſuffering, to *no ſuffering* at all? And indeed *humane nature* muſt be put off, e'er ſuch *apathy* can be put on. It is not manly, but worſe than brutal: the *ſtupidity* of a poſt or a ſtone, not the *patience* or *firmneſs* of a man. 'Tis what had been utterly unbecoming in *Jeſus*, if he had had no *will* to raiſe his friend. *Power* to raiſe him, he could not want. But *ſympathizing tears* mingled with thoſe of his ſiſters had, in ſuch caſe, not been unbeſeeming in him, as a man, or in his diviner character, but a great inſtance of his *humanity*, *tenderneſs*, *commiſeration* and *good-nature*. Of all which this ludicrous infidel ſeems to have no taſte. A childiſh laugh, a diſdainful arrogance, and a ſtupid inſenſibility to what ſhould give him either *compunction* or *pity*, are, with him, the ornaments of man, and the glories of philoſophy. How much better did the *Roman poet* underſtand humane nature, than Mr. *W.* and his *philoſophers*; who ſays,

—molliſſima corda
Humano generi dare ſe natura fatetur
Cum lacrymas dedit. Juv. Sat. xv. *v.* 131.
Nature, which gave us tears, hereby deſign'd
To ſhew, the tendereſt hearts become our kind.

It is *this* that, in his account raiſes man above the herd of mutes, and entitles him to *animus*, a *mind*; when they, who are deſtitute of humane affections, have no more than an *anima*, a *ſenſitive ſoul*. But

W. IIdly

SECONDLY, he obſerves, * *that* John *ſays*, Jeſus *called* Lazarus *out of his cave with a* loud *voice*. True, and what then? *Was dead* Lazarus *deafer than* Jairus's *daughter, or the widow's ſon?* No certainly. All were equally dead, and equally deaf. *Or was* Lazarus's *ſoul out of the call of a lower voice?* How ſouls out of

* P. 40.

of the body can hear voices, or whether they can hear them at all, is nothing to his or our purpoſe. *Some ſuch* ſilly *reaſon muſt be given for the loud voice here. And how abſurd this is,* infidels *will judge, till* chriſtians *can aſſign a better.* But his invention is only lucky in finding out *ſilly* reaſons, it ſeems, for chriſtians. His buſineſs is to make chriſtians ſilly, and ſet infidels a grinning. But he really expoſes them, when he thinks, *they* will judge as *he* repreſents. * *The dead can hear the whiſper of the almighty if power go along with it,* (I ſuppoſe it ſhould have been) *a whiſper, if almighty power go along with it, as ſoon as the ſound of a trumpet.* John *then ſhould have ſaid nothing of a* loud voice, *unleſs he meant to adapt his ſtory, to the conceptions and capacities of the* vulgar, *who have no apprehenſions of God's power, out of ſenſible and humane repreſentations of it. John* had no meaning but to relate the fact as it was. No conſideration of the capacity was needful. 'Tis a *circumſtance* every one can underſtand, who knows what it is to ſpeak with a loud voice. Only Mr. *W.* has a mighty luſt, to make the *profeſſors* of *chriſtianity*, a ſet of men with mere *mobbiſh* capacities, that he may inſult them with the greater *apathy*, I mean inhumanity. For if they are ſuch low, deſpicable creatures, pity were more *manly*, than ſuch unmerciful ſcorn. What he means by *ſenſible and humane repreſentations of God's power, out of which theſe* mobbiſh *capacities of chriſtians can have no apprehenſions of it*, himſelf and his infidels may fathom, it is out of my reach, I own.

BUT as *low* as he ſuppoſes the *capacities* of chriſtians, there are few among them but know, that a *whiſper, when attended by divine power, will be as eaſily heard by the dead, as the ſound of a trumpet*, if by this he meant a whiſper thus attended, will as ſoon call them back to life. And what then? Muſt *Jeſus* have only whiſpered at raiſing *Lazarus*, to ſhew he acted by *divine power?* The dead may be raiſed *without* even a whiſper, if divine power be exerted. Was not even this, *therefore*, to have been avoided, on the ſame ac-

* P. 40.

B. 1. count? If it be good arguing, *Lazarus* could have been raiſed with a *whiſper*, therefore he ſhould not have ſpoken with a *loud voice*; is it not full as good, He could have been raiſed with *a nod*, therefore he ſhould not have ſo much as whiſpered, nay by a meer volition *without* a nod, therefore he ſhould have ſtood there *mute* and *motionleſs*. Had this been the caſe, can we be ſure Mr. *W.* would not have hit on ſome merry conceit, to make *this* look *ſilly* too, and refer it to the judgment of *ludicrous infidels*, whether this were not an abſurdity in the ſtory?

B. 2. BUT,* *why was he not content on this occaſion to ſpeak in his* ordinary voice, *as at raiſing* Jairus's *daughter, and the* widow's ſon? How does he know, he then ſpake in his ordinary voice? *The Evangeliſts* ſay not whether it were in this voice, or one *louder* than ordinary. He might, for any thing appears, call on all three with a *loud voice*. But admit his ſuppoſition, that there was a difference, may no reaſon be given of it, beſides his *ſilly-ones*. Sure there may.

B. 3. THOUGH the effect is certain, where divine power is the *agent*, yet a worker of miracles, who would make it evident, that he acts by divine power and commiſſion, muſt give ſome *ſign* that the power of God is exerted at his direction, *when*, *where*, and *on whom* he pleaſes. Can any ſign be more proper than the voice, when any one is to be fetch'd back from the dead? Or than calling on them, † *damſel ariſe*; ‖ *young man, ariſe?* And is it not *proper*, that this ſhould be loud enough to be heard, by all the *witneſſes* to the miracle, and diſtinguiſhed to be the miracle-worker's voice, that *his* intereſt in the effect may be diſcernible, as well as the operation of the divine power.

B. 4. AND though the *humane voice* of the miracle-worker, can contribute nothing to the effect, becauſe the dead muſt be made alive, e'er they can, at leaſt in the inſtant they can hear it; yet is it *highly proper*, that the revived perſon ſhould hear the voice, at the call of which, it comes back into life: and therefore that *the divine*

* P. 40. † Mark v. 41. Luke viii. 54. ‖ Chap. vii. 14.

divine power ſhould exert itſelf, in the inſtant the voice reaches his ears, that he may perceive life return at *its* call, and be directed thereby to the *perſon* who utters it.

THERE might, therefore, be a reaſon for *Jeſus*'s lifting his voice, when *Lazarus* was raiſed, though he only ſpake with his ordinary voice, in the other caſes: *Jairus*'s daughter was in a chamber, where only *five* beſides *Jeſus* and herſelf were preſent. His ordinary voice could reach her ears, and was ſufficient to let *her* and *all preſent* know, ſhe came to life at his call, eſpecially as he took her by the hand, and it is likely held it, till her life and ſenſes were reſtored. The *widow's ſon* was raiſed before a great multitude, conſiſting of thoſe who attended *Jeſus*, and thoſe who followed him to his burial. *Jeſus* here leaves his attendants, meets the corpſe, and ſtops the bier. His *ordinary voice* might reach the young man's ears, and though the whole multitude might not hear, the *other circumſtances*, on the youth's revival, ſufficiently manifeſted *his* agency in it, eſpecially on his preſenting him alive to his *mother*. And though it is not improbable, the company preſent at his revival, was greater than at the raiſing *Lazarus*; yet as *he* was laid in a cave, to which the voice from without does not ſo eaſily penterate, and *Jeſus*'s agency could not otherwiſe ſo plainly appear, as in the former caſe, it was *proper* that he ſhould raiſe his voice, that it might the better reach *Lazarus*'s ears lying in the cave, and *all preſent* might know it was at *his* call he came forth.

BESIDES the calling one out of the grave into new life, is a very *awful work*, and ſhould ſtrike all ſpectators with dread. And if an *awful voice* contributed any thing towards the making this impreſſion deeper, it was fit this ſhould concur: if the *capacities* of the *vulgar* are ſuch, that things divine do not impreſs them ſo much, without ſome *ſenſible aſſiſtance*, it is no *impropriety* in a worker of miracles, to lend them this help.

B. 5.

AND as *Jeſus* had openly told the *Jews*, that * *the hour is coming when all in their graves ſhall hear the voice of the ſon of man, and ſhall come forth, they that have done*

* John v. 28, 29.

done well to a reſurrection of life, and they that have done ill to a reſurrection of damnation. And we are * elſewhere told, this *great event* ſhall be preceded with the *ſound of a trumpet, and a great ſhout, and the voice of the archangel.* This Mr. *W.* may call, for any thing I know, a *fooliſh* and *incredible* account; but to every mind, not ſickned with prejudice, muſt look very *befitting* the ſolemnity. It is not improbable, that *Jeſus*, on this occaſion, the raiſing one from the grave, might by a *louder* voice prefigure that ſolemnity, and impreſs the minds of thoſe preſent, with the *deeper* ſenſe of what he had told them. Mr. *W.* it is to be hoped, will not like this reaſon the worſe, for the *allegory* couched in it.

BUT whether *theſe* or *others* were the reaſon of the loud voice here, was not *Jeſus* a proper judge in what manner he ſhould act? Or muſt he have forborn to act, till he could conſult with Mr. *W.* about the *propriety* of his conduct? Or muſt he paſs for a *juggler*, and no *worker* of *miracles*, becauſe he did not?

W. III. Thirdly, he obſerves, *That* Lazarus † *came out of his cave with a napkin about his face*, and he might have added, *with his grave-clothes on.* How elſe ſhould a man buried have come out, unleſs he had been thrown in naked? To ſee him thus come out, would have been no comely ſight. But I ſuppoſe he would have had him come out habited as a *living man*, that he might have had *demonſtration*, that he was ſhut up *alive.*

BUT this circumſtance of the *napkin* is ſo pretty a conceit, that we had it ‡ *once* before, and in his *Rabbi*'s letter have it over again. This, with *him, is ſuch* ‖ *an objection to the* miracle, *that* chriſtian prieſts *muſt own, if it were a miracle, it was ill conducted by Jeſus, or fooliſhly related by his* Evangeliſt. This *riſible creature* and his *Rabbi* have a wondrous luſt to make *Jeſus*, this mighty juggler, a *ſimpleton*, and all who tell or believe his ſtory, a pack of *ninnies.* But why, for the ſake of this circumſtance, is *Jeſus* ſuch a blunderer in conduct, or his *Evangeliſt* ſo fooliſh in telling the tale? Why *the* ** *napkin being on his face, the ſpectators could not behold*

* 1 Theſ. iv. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 52. † P. 41. ‡ P. 30. ‖ P. 50. ** P. 30.

hold the change of countenance, from a dead to a live one, which was of the eſſence *of the* miracle. This man has *deep* inſight into the *eſſences* of things. I ſhould have once thought, that the *eſſence* of the *miracle* lay, in raiſing the dead man to life. The *ſight* of the countenance was not a neceſſary circumſtance, as will preſently be ſeen. *It* * *was an abſurdity that the napkin was not taken off*, ſays Mr. *W. that the ſpectators might behold the mortified look, and the miraculous change.* Jeſus, *to prevent all ſuſpicion of that*, ſays his † *Rabbi, ſhould have firſt ordered this to be taken off, that his mortified countenance might have been viewed, before the miraculous change.* This *neglect will be a laſting objection to the miracle.*

BUT I can ſee no *abſurdity* here, nor ground for any *objection.* If the ſpectators knew *Lazarus* lay in his cave *dead*, was it not evidence enough of the miracle, to ſee him come forth *alive?* It is highly probable, *many* of the preſent ſpectators, had ſeen him dead, e'er he was conveyed to the cave; and *all the reſt* knew this to be the caſe, as well as the people in *England* know a man to be dead, who *after* a time of ſickneſs, is by his ſurviving friends publickly laid in his grave. What room would there be in ſuch a caſe for *ſuſpicion?* And where no ſuſpicion, what need of *ſatisfaction?* None there doubted his *death* (at leaſt neither Mr. *W.* nor his *Rabbi* have proved they did) nor could they doubt the *miracle*, when they ſaw him come out alive. B.

BUT *to* prevent *ſuſpicion of a cheat, the napkin ſhould have been removed*, ſays his *Rabbi.* But where there was *no* ſuſpicion, nor *room* for it, which was the caſe of the preſent ſpectators, what need of *this* precaution? For the ſake of ſuch ſuſpicious people in future times? Would it not have been a wiſe ſpeech for *Jeſus* to have made on the occaſion, "Sirs, though no one preſent, "I dare ſay, doubts whether *Lazarus* be dead, yet to "prevent all *ſuſpicion* of cheat in a merry *Engliſh* B. D. "and a *Jewiſh Rabbi* of the ſame name, who about "*ſeventeen hundred* years hence, may ſuſpect foul play, "and

* P. 41. † P. 49, 50.

" and think I am come to call a *living man* out of his " cave, and give it out for a reſurrection; becauſe, " among the reſt of his funeral dreſs, his *face is bound* " *about with a napkin*; go in *one* of you, take this off, " expoſe the face to publick view, that *every one* of " you here preſent, may teſtify for me, ſo many hun- " dred years hence, when *this objection* ſhall be ſtarted " that here was *no fraud*, but a real miracle." How merry would Mr. *W.* have made *himſelf*, his *infidels*, and his *Rabbi*, with this ſpeech? How *ill* a conductor of his deſign would he have made *Jeſus*, and how *ſilly* a tale-teller his Evangeliſt?

HAD any preſent ſuſpected *fraud*, and ſignified this, no doubt they had had ſatisfaction, and this circumſtance had been related. Yet *ſuch* a ſuſpicion had been exceeding injurious to *Jeſus*'s known character. He was honeſt, open, artleſs, and undeſigning, both in words and deeds. His worſt enemies the *Phariſees*, never pretended that he ſhammed the world with *juggling tricks*, inſtead of *mighty works*; though, in caſting out devils, they charged him with a confederacy with *Beelzebub*. When, on his arraignment, the *High-Prieſt* queſtions him *concerning his doctrine and diſciples*, he tells him, * *I ſpake openly to the world, I ever taught in the ſynagogues and temple, whither the* Jews *reſort, and in ſecret have I ſaid nothing*. And had he been queſtioned of his *deeds*, he might have returned the ſame anſwer. Where he taught, there he wrought his miracles. He did them not in a corner. Nor is any thing of *juggling* alledged againſt him at his trial.

WAS it fit one of *this* character, on ſuch an occaſion, ſhould ſo much as *ſeem* to clear himſelf of cheat and impoſture? When he had given no occaſion in his conduct for *any* to ſuſpect him, and *none* preſent diſcovered any ſuch unworthy or unjuſt ſentiments of him? A *juggler*, indeed, when he plays tricks, is wont to flouriſh with a *ſhew* of fair-dealing, the better to impoſe on the unwary and credulous ſpectators: but for a *worker* of *miracles* to have given himſelf ſuch airs,

* John xviii. 20.

had been quite *out* of character. It was more becoming ſuch a one, to leave his performances to juſtify *themſelves*, and defy his enemies to diſcredit them, whilſt himſelf was frank and open, and proceeded whether friends or enemies were preſent. This was the caſe here. Enemies as well as friends were preſent, and *Jeſus* could not be ignorant of it.

AND if he were * *wiſe enough*, as the *Rabbi* (much to my ſurprize) tells us, *to be aware of this objection, and the* mighty importance *of removing the napkin*; had he been a *juggler*, he would certainly have had a trick for it. Had the view of the face been called for, his reputation had been ruined, *without* ſuch proviſion. And when the croud about him were a medley of enemies and friends, he did not know but this would be done. So that he run a deſperate riſque, if this were not provided for. Of this his *Rabbi* is well aware, and therefore ſays, † chriſtian prieſts *muſt own, if this were a miracle, it was* ill *conducted by* Jeſus. *Had it been a juggle*, he ſhould have ſaid. But when *Jeſus* appears to have made no ſuch proviſion, when yet *he was wiſe enough to foreſee the objection*, he did not act as *a juggler*, concerned to guard againſt the ſuſpicion of his enemies, and ſecure his own credit. And if not as *a juggler*, then as a *real worker of miracles*, for yet we have no intermediate character. And whether this argument will beſt fit the *Rabbi*'s purpoſe, or that of *chriſtians*, is left to the unprejudiced ſenſe of mankind.

YET this *neglect in not removing the napkin*, is of ſuch W
importance, that if this *Rabbi* is to believed, *the* now *Jews hereupon* ‡ *deny the miracle*. I much queſtion this, for *though blindneſs has befallen them*, I cannot think them in general ſo very weak. Their anceſtors did not B
think it ſo momentous a matter, nor for the ſake of this circumſtance, diſbelieve the fact. This is not only plain from other parts of the narration in the *Evangeliſt*, but from *this* very circumſtance's being in it. For had this been ſo mighty and ‖ *laſting an objection*, as he tells us, *againſt the miracle*, and ſo eſteemed by the

* P. 50. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. ‖ Ibid.

Jews of that time, though *John* had *outlived all the witneſſes who could detect the fraud*, he had not ſo far outlived all his ſenſes, as to forget this objection, and the miſchief it did; and muſt reaſonably think, what *had* been, *might* be, again; and therefore, ſure would have left this circumſtance of the *napkin*, out of his ſtory: unleſs the *whole* were meer invention, which the *Rabbi* cannot ſay, whatever Mr. *W.* may, becauſe he makes the juggling conduct of *Jeſus* in this miracle, *one* article of his indictment. However, unleſs *John* were paſt dotage, he could not leave this circumſtance in, had the *Jews* of that time laid ſuch a ſtreſs on it. I have read his goſpel, and cannot believe him ſo far gone. And muſt hence conclude that either the *Jews* of that time, were leſs ſagacious than the preſent *Jews*, or that the now *Jews* (if this *Rabbi* belyes them not) lay *mighty ſtreſs*, on what their anceſtors, full as wiſe as *they*, never thought would bear it.

W. IV. The Jews having the fraud sought to take him & put him to death.

Fourthly, He obſerves, † that St. John *ſays*, *Many of the Jews*, who had ſeen the things that *Jeſus* did, *here* believed on him, and ſome of them, *who did not believe*, went their ways to the *Phariſees*, and told them what *Jeſus* had done; that is, *in this pretended miracle, and how the buſineſs was tranſacted.—After what manner the intrigue was managed, and complained of the fraud*, ſays his ‡ *Rabbi*. *Whereupon*, ſays ‖ Mr. *W.* (upon what but this report and complaint,) *the chief Prieſts and Phariſees were ſo incenſed, that* from that day forth they took counſel together to put him to death; referring us to *ver.* 53. His *Rabbi* chimes in with him. * Jeſus *counterfeited a miracle, and was detected in the operation; whereupon* (*viz.* this counterfeiting and detection) *the chief Prieſts, from* that day *took counſel to put the impoſtor and this confederate to death.* For though this is not ſaid of *Jeſus* and *Lazarus*, 'tis ſaid of what, *† he tells us, is an *exact parallel.* And elſewhere ** he tells us, *This piece of fraud, in all probability, was one article of the indictment againſt* Jeſus; *becauſe the chief Prieſts and Phariſees,*

† P. 41. ‡ P. 49. ‖ P. 42. * P. 47. *† P. 48. ** P. 51.

Phariſees, from the date *of this pretended miracle, took counſel together to put him to death, not clandeſtinely, nor tumultuouſly, but judicially, and that on* unqueſtionable *detection of the fraud.*

* THIS *circumſtance*, Mr. *W.* ſays, *he had not mentioned for the honour of* Jeſus (of which his whole piece ſhews he is very tender) *but upon account of his* Rabbi's *letter, who has hence formed an objection againſt* Lazarus's *reſurrection, which he has publiſhed, that Chriſtianity might not ſuffer, by the* Rabbi's *handing it about clandeſtinely. But from theſe circumſtances he dares not argue.* Which to me is very wonderful. For, I am ſure, *he* and his *Rabbi* too, dare falſify the ſtory in *John*, in the moſt barefaced, and notorious manner.

B. He falsifys y Story most notoriously and shews in falls it

FOR *John*'s relation is this, † *Then many of the* Jews *who came to* Mary, *and had ſeen the things which* Jeſus *did, believed on him. But ſome of them went their way to the Phariſees, and told them what* Jeſus *had done.* Was this report of theirs, how the intrigue was managed, how the affair in the pretended miracle was tranſacted, as Mr. *W.* and his *Rabbi* ſay? Did it contain any complaint of fraud? Attend to what follows in *John*. ‡ *Then the chief Prieſts and Phariſees gathered a council,* συνέδριον. This was not to be done preſently. It is probably meant of the *Sanhedrim*, their *chief council*, which muſt be ſummoned e'er they could convene, and the members, 'tis likely, lived diſperſed over the city. It might be a day or two e'er they aſſembled. But when they are met, what is the ſubject of their conſultation? Is there any hint of *fraud detected?* Are the witneſſes ſummoned to make it out? Is it opened by any member? No, they appear all convinced of a *real miracle*, and like people in deſpair cry out, ‖ *What do we? for this man does many miracles. If we let him alone all men will believe him, and the* Romans *will come and take away both our place and nation.* If the fraud was detected, whether, by the *napkin, the obſerved motion of the body before the word of command, or the fragments of the food on which*, one bound hand and foot,

* P. 42. † John xv. 45, 46. ‡ Ver. 47. ‖ Ver. 47, 48.

with his face tied up in a napkin, *ſubſiſted*, as the * *Rabbi* ſuggeſts, for four days; why are they in ſuch a pannic? Was there any danger *all men ſhould believe on him*, whom they could *unqueſtionably* prove an impoſtor, and reſolved to indict and condemn *as ſuch*, and put both him and his *confederate* to death for the fraud by them *unqueſtionably* detected?

But to go on with *John*'s relation——When this danger from the *Romans* is ſuggeſted, † Caiaphas, *the* High-Prieſt *that year*, ſays, *Ye know nothing at all, nor conſider, that it is expedient for us, that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation periſh not.* It is upon the expediency of taking him off, left upon his ſetting up for a *temporal prince*, which they expected the *Meſſiah* would be, the *Romans* ſhould be provoked to deſtroy them, that they *took counſel* to put him to death, and that by form of law. And it is from *this date*, not *that* of the pretended miracle, this counſel is taken. It is not becauſe he was an *impoſtor*, and they could prove it upon him; not becauſe *the fraud* was detected and complained of: but becauſe they knew it was *a real* miracle, and feared it would gain *Jeſus* much credit, and many diſciples, and expoſe them to danger from the *Romans*, by his ſetting up his kingdom amongſt them. And are not theſe circumſtances a *manifeſt diſcredit* to the miracle of *Lazarus*'s reſurrection? I am ſure they are no credit to Mr. *W.* and his *Rabbi*. Men who can by ſuch *interpolations* pervert the meaning of a writer, and make him ſay the direct contrary to what he does ſay, and that ſo openly, that a child, upon comparing them, muſt ſee it, will ſoon write themſelves out of credit, with all who have *common ſenſe* or *honeſty*.

But we have not yet all. After this *fair account* of the reaſon, why the *Jews* reſolved to put *Jeſus* to death, Mr. *W.* foiſts into the ſtory, a paſſage out of the *next chapter*, which happened not till ſome time after. ‖ *They conſulted*, ſays he, *to put* Lazarus *alſo to death*; and then adds, Jeſus *therefore*, *and his diſciples and* Lazarus

* P. 49. † John xi. 49, 50. ‖ P. 42.

zarus *fled for it*, for THEY walked no more openly among the *Jews*, but went thence into a country near the wilderneſs (*a convenient hiding-place*) and there continued with his diſciples. Another groſs falſification, in which Mr. *W.* tacks things ſo together, as to make poor, doting *John* tell his tale very ungrammatically, Jeſus *and his diſciples*, *and* Lazarus *fled*, *for* THEY *walked no more*, &c. *but went*, &c. *and continued with his diſciples*; that is, Jeſus *and* his diſciples, *and* Lazarus *walked*, *and went and continued with his diſciples*. Who now is the dotard, *John* or Mr. *W?* It will be ſeen when we come to *John*'s relation.

His *Rabbi* falſifies the text in the ſame manner, tranſpoſing the words, to render it a little more grammatical. * *Why*, ſays he, *did* Jeſus *and his diſciples*, *with* Lazarus, *run away and abſcond? For* they *walked no more*——*but went*——*and there* Jeſus *continued with his diſciples*, quoting for it, *ver.* 54. This indeed is not exceeding grammatical, though an amendment on Mr. *W.*

JOHN's plain ſtory is much better told; for having mentioned the conſultation to put him to death, he adds, † Jeſus *therefore walked no more openly among the* Jews, *but went thence into a country near the wilderneſs*, *and there continued with his diſciples*, viz. the *twelve*, his uſual attendants. Not a word is there of *Lazarus* in the paſſage, unleſs he be included in the *diſciples*, which neither Mr. *W.* nor his *Rabbi* have right to do, both having excluded him; one expreſſing himſelf, Jeſus, *and his* diſciples, *and* Lazarus; *the other*, Jeſus, *and his diſciples*, *with* Lazarus. It is to raiſe an out-cry of *guilt* as an evidence of *fraud*, that both falſify the ſtory, and make *Lazarus* on this occaſion abſcond. Whereas, at this time, *Lazarus* does not appear to have been in any danger. It was upon *Jeſus*'s coming again to *Bethany*, ſome diſtance of time afterward, and but ‡ *ſix days before the paſſover*, and the great reſort of the *Jews*, ‖ not only to ſee *Jeſus*, but *Lazarus* whom he had raiſed, that the *Jews* conſulted to put *Lazarus* to death alſo; becauſe,

* P. 44. † John xi. 54. ‡ Ch. xii. 1, ‖ Ver. 9, 10, 11.

becauſe, on his ſcore, *many of the* Jews *went away, and believed in* Jeſus. And before his death was conſulted, there was no *reaſon* for his abſconding, and after, there was no *room* for it. The † very next day *Jeſus* makes his entrance into *Jeruſalem*, and is there publickly teaching every day, till he is apprehended four days afterward. *Lazarus* therefore did not abſcond with *Jeſus*, nor, as appears in the Evangeliſts, abſcond at all. This is mere invention of this *double writer*, without any colour from the *evangelical* ſtory.

NOR did *Jeſus* himſelf abſcond, though he withdrew from the neighbourhood of *Jeruſalem*. Many, both friends and enemies, knew where he was, and reſorted to him, as is plain from the * *Evangeliſt*. And notwithſtanding the *Rabbi*'s confidence, that *his anceſtors unqueſtionably detected the fraud, and were thereupon in the right to proſecute with ſeverity all concerned in it*; *this* very circumſtance, with which he makes ſuch ado, even according to his own account, is evidence *unqueſtionable*, that he is miſtaken. *Jeſus*'s diſciples had, without doubt, no braver ſpirits than their maſter. Had they therefore been *privy* to the fraud, and known the detection of it by the *Jews*, and that they *had a right to puniſh all concerned in it*; they knew they did not want inclination, that themſelves were not *unconcerned*, nor is it likely they would have gone and abſconded with *Jeſus*; but, as they did afterward at his apprehenſion, ‡ *had left him and fled*, and ſhifted each for himſelf. They would not have thought themſelves ſafe in *his* company, no not in *a wilderneſs in the country*, as his ⸸ *Rabbi* words it, *how convenient an hiding-place* ſoever; much leſs have appeared with him *there*, and much leſs ſtill have come back with him to *Jeruſalem*, and appeared publickly there in defiance of *them*, who had *detected the cheat*, and reſolved for it to put *him* to death, eſpecially when *the* ‖ *populace, in ſuch caſe, would hardly wait the leiſure of juſtice*

† Joh. xi. 12. * Mat. xix. 20. ‡ Mark iv. 50. ⸸ P. 48. ‖ Ibid.

juſtice to diſpatch, and make terrible examples of them, or, in * Mr. *W*'s language, *to ſacrifice* them. Theſe circumſtances needed not have ſet Mr. *W.* a trembling; his *Rabbi*, with all his ſedate *reaſonings*, has found nothing in them, to impair the *credit* of the miracle.

How? † *Is not here a plain ſign of guilt and fraud?* Where? *Men who have God's truth, and power, and cauſe on their ſides, never want courage and reſolution to ſtand to it. And however* chriſtian prieſts *may palliate the cowardly and timorous conduct of* Jeſus *and his confederates in this caſe; yet* with me *it is* like demonſtration, *there was a diſcovered cheat in the miracle; or they would have undoubtedly faced their enemies without fears and apprehenſions of danger from them.* I doubt Mr. *W.* and this *ſedate reaſoner* know little of demonſtration. To *invent* facts in defiance of the true relation, cited to vouch for them, and then draw *concluſions* from them, is as unlike demonſtration, as Mr. *W*'s ludicrous rant, is like ſober reaſoning, or a jack-pudding a B. D. The confederate meant, abſconded not. And if *Jeſus* for a while withdrew from *Jeruſalem*, courage and reſolution are different things from *daring temerity*. And ſhortly after, *Jeſus* had courage and reſolution to *face his enemies*, appear publickly in the temple, preach openly, and openly rebuke the *Jews*, even though he knew and foretold ‡ *his diſciples*, they would *ſacrifice him*, as this *merry* gentleman expreſſes it.

AND is not the non-abſconding of the *confederate*, and this appearance of the *principal* again, and his *undaunted facing of his enemies*, though he knew they would take away his life, as he had often told his diſciples, nay, and yielding himſelf into their hands, when ‖ he had the power to ſave himſelf; much more like demonſtration, that he had *God's cauſe, and truth, and power on his ſide?*

WHEN he is brought to his *Trial*, of which the *Evangeliſts*

* P. 42. † P. 44. 45. ‡ Luke xviii. 31—34. ‖ John xviii. 6. Mat. xxvi. 53.

Evangeliſts have given us a pretty large account: nothing of fraud or impoſture in *this*, or *any other* miracle, appears to have been alledged againſt him, much leſs proved. This *Rabbi* indeed tells us, that,

W. ‖ *according to his own Evangeliſts, he was arraigned as a* deceiver *and* blaſphemer, *in pretending to the* ſonſhip *and power of God by his miracles, and in all probability*, ſays he, *this piece of fraud was one article of his indictment.* This is, like the reſt, foul miſrepreſentation. His *Evangeliſts* ſay not a word; give not an hint of his being arraigned as a *deceiver, in pretending to the ſonſhip and power of God by his miracles*, or even a *blaſphemer*, on this account. * It plainly appears they would have made him a *capital offender*, and it is not unlikely, might aim at proving *blaſphemy* on him, if they could. Witneſſes they ſuborn'd, but could get none who agreed in their teſtimony. Their proof was ſo deficient, that they ſeek matter of condemnation from his *own mouth*. When they cannot get him to accuſe himſelf, the *high prieſt* puts him to his oath, *if he were the Chriſt, the ſon of God?* And on his owning it, *rends his clothes, and charges him with blaſphemy*. The reſt concur in this ſentiment, and he is condemned. No proof of *impoſture* is made, or *offered* to be made on his trial; his bare acknowledgment of his being *Meſſias*, is all the crime laid to his charge. With being a *deceiver*, he is not charged at all, any farther than is implied in his owning himſelf for *Meſſias*. Into the *merits* of the cauſe they enter not: nor inquire whether he pretended to make out this *by miracles?* Nor whether his miracles were *real* or *feigned*, inſtances of *divine power* or *juggling tricks* and impoſture. And † the charge brought againſt him to *Pilate*, is, that he pretended to be the *Meſſiah*, and to ſet up for a king, to the prejudice of *Cæſar*'s right. Not a word is muttered of any juggling tricks uſed by him, to fix himſelf in the throne.

B. *The charges againſt Jeſus — neg. not as a juggler — Bad.*

Poſ. 1.

2.

‖ P. 51. * Mat. xxvi. 57—67. Mark xiv. 53—65. Luke xxii. 6, &c. John xviii. 19—22. † Mat. xxvii. 11. Luke xxiii. 2, 3. John xviii. 33—36. xix. 12.

throne. And to *Pilate* he appears innocent. Is not this *Rabbi* now a very *honeſt man* as well as *ſedate reaſoner?*

BUT to ſhew how little regard he has to what he ſays, he preſently belyes the *Evangeliſt* again *. *It is plain*, ſays he, *from the ſtory in* John, *that there was a diſpute among the by-ſtanders at* Lazarus's *reſurrection, whether it were a miracle or no.* The contrary to which, as has been ſhewn already, is the truth. Thoſe who went away to the *Phariſees*, knew, and *reported* it to be a miracle. But he then advances a ſenſeleſs opinion of the preſent *Jews*, (if *they* are not belyed by him as well as *John*) into a *tradition*, and with *this* tradition would diſcredit an *hiſtory*, penned by *a witneſs* to the fact, eſtabliſhed in credit through *all ages* ſince, to the preſent time; and might have been to all *future generations*, had not he, by his unthought of obſervations, *ruined its credit*, as he † tells us, with an air ſo perfectly reſembling the *publiſher* of his letter, that from this ſingle circumſtance (though there are many more) I dare aver *this Rabbi*, is *that* ſelf-ſame *T. W.* B. D.

BUT what is this wonder-working tradition? *That the chief prieſts and* civil magiſtrates *of* Bethany, *for the better determining the diſpute* — What diſpute, but that of the *by-ſtanders, whether it were a miracle?* Plain, as he here tells us, from the ſtory in *John*, but elſewhere *certain, from* chriſtian commentators. Though how their opinion ſhould make *that* certain, which appears not in the ſtory, no one, but ſuch *ſedate reaſoners*, as he and his cloſe friend, can tell. — *And quieting the minds of the people.* — What people? Thoſe at the cave, or thoſe of *Jeruſalem?* or the peoples minds in general? which do not appear to have been diſturbed. But what did they for this needleſs purpoſe ‖? *They require, that* Jeſus *ſhould re-act the miracle on another perſon, there lately dead and buried.* And what followed? *He declining this teſt of his power, the whole multitude of the believers* before;

* P. 51. † P. 53 ‖ P. 51, 52.

as well as unbelievers, queſtioned the reſurrection of Lazarus, *and were highly incenſed againſt both, for the deceit in it. And this was* one *reaſon for that vehement and univerſal out-cry and demand, at* Jeſus's *trial, for his crucifixion.* Indeed, *for the certainty of this tradition, or opinion,* he ſays, *he will not anſwer*; which is a piece of modeſty very unuſual. *But it has the face of truth and credibility.* How ſo? *He dares appeal to chriſtian* prieſts *and* magiſtrates, *whether they would not require ſuch a miracle to be acted over again, in caſe of a diſpute about its* truth? *And if the* juggler *refuſed, whether there would not be a* clamour, *a general* clamour *againſt him?* Was there ever a *reaſoner* ſo *ſedate?* And is this all that is neceſſary to make this tradition have the *face* of *credibility.*

Does he not lay the *diſpute* among the *by-ſtanders*, and the *diſquiet* in the minds of the people occaſioned by it, as the *foundation* of this tradition? which is plain either in *John*, or certain in *chriſtian commentators.* This is not plain in *John*, but the contrary is moſt plain. Has a ſtory without a *bottom*, the *face of credibility?* If there was no diſpute, nor ſuch diſquiet of mind as, in *John*, it is plain there was not; what need the chief prieſts or civil magiſtrates of *Bethany*, to take *this* or *any other* meaſures, to *determine* the diſpute, or *quiet* people's minds?

I am at a loſs too, who theſe *civil magiſtrates* of *Bethany* were, who were joined in commiſſion with the *chief prieſts* for this *needleſs*, but *important* determination. It is called κώμη, *vicus, a village.* Its diſtance from *Jeruſalem*, about *fifteen furlongs*, ſhews it could not be a place of any conſiderable largeneſs. Suppoſe ſuch a place as *Bethnal-Green.* The *civil magiſtrates*, if it were a village as conſiderable as *Highgate*, *Hampſtead*, or *Newington*, here in *England*, could be no other than the *conſtable*, *headborough*, and *tything-man.* It would ſound ſomewhat oddly, were ſuch officers put into a commiſſion, with two or three of our *biſhops*, to iſſue a diſpute of this nature. But the chief prieſts of the *Jews*, and the *civil magiſtrates* of their villages, might

might be more upon a par. Nor would they take ſnuff, as I dare ſay Mr. *W.* believes our *Engliſh biſhops* would, at making a bench, with ſuch *civil magiſtrates* here.

BUT be this as it will, with *himſelf*, one would think this tradition ſhould not have the *leaſt face of credibility*. He had told us before, * *'Tis certain from chriſtian commentators, ſome of the by-ſtanders did not believe the miracle, but went to the Phariſees, and told how the intrigue was managed, and complained of the fraud.* And *he can tell how they diſcovered it too.* Has it now *the face of truth or credibility*, that when the *impoſture* was detected, and they had the *proofs* in their hands, that the *ſenate* of the *Jews*, ſhould ſend a deputation of *chief prieſts*, to join the *magiſtrates* of *Bethany*, in a freſh trial of the *impoſtor*? Would any *chriſtian prieſt* and *magiſtrate* adviſe in ſuch a caſe, to ſuch deputation? For what, to determine a matter already determined? or to quiet the peoples minds? Had they not been quieted at once, by his *trial* and *condemnation* on *clear* evidence? I doubt after all, the *unqueſtionable* evidence was to be queſtioned, or elſe they had never called the *juggler* to a freſh teſt of his power.

ONE would think too, that after ſuch a diſcovery and diſpute upon the ſpot, and ſuch complaint of the fraud to the *chief council* of the *Jews*, a juggler, eſpecially one ſo *cowardly* and *poor-ſpirited* as this *Rabbi* and his friend repreſent *Jeſus*, could not have the front to ſtay upon the place, till this deputation arrived, but ſhould have took to his heels, on the firſt news. Much leſs that he ſhould ſome time after, for many days together, have publickly appeared in *Jeruſalem*, and the very temple.

BUT ſhould he have had ſuch uncommon aſſurance, why was he not preſently *apprehended*, and brought to juſtice? Why, when they had proof of *fraud* in the former miracle, and he refuſed to come to the *teſt* afreſh, did they let him eſcape? Had not the *magiſtrates* of *Bethany*, with a deputation of the *chief prieſts*, authority to arreſt ſuch a criminal? This could not be

* P. 49.

wanting. Nor could they want *hands*, when the *whole multitude, believers and unbelievers, were ſo incenſed againſt him and his confederate.* Why were they not clapt up in priſon, but ſuffered to go off from this *awful tribunal*, and get away to a *convenient hiding-place, to a wilderneſs in the country?*

And if the *whole multitude were ſo incenſed againſt him*, upon this detection, how came ſo many to reſort to *Bethany* * to ſee him and *Lazarus*, upon his return thither, ſome time after? How came ſuch multitudes to attend him in his entrance into *Jeruſalem*, that the Phariſees cry † *the world was gone after him?* And that, when he afterward ‡ rebuked the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* in the temple, and they *ſought to lay hands on him, but feared the multitude who took him for a prophet?* And how certain is it now, that the detection of *this fraud, was* one *reaſon of the general cry for his crucifixion?* And what a mighty matter has this *Rabbi* made, of this *terrible* circumſtance?

W. He ſhould have ſtuck to that argument of his, ‖ *That there are no memorials of the life and miracles of* Jeſus *extant, but what are written by his diſciples.* And who elſe ſhould have written theſe memorials? His enemies? No doubt; for had ſuch memorials been written, he would have concluded their truth *out of queſtion*, and this had deſtroyed the credit of Chriſtianity. And can't he conclude the reports of his diſciples falſe *without doubt*, and ruine its credit as effectually? He could have no memorials but either from *friends* or *enemies. But not only has old time devoured, but* chriſtians *when they got power into their hands*, wilfully *deſtroyed many writings of our* anceſtors, *as well as of* Celſus *and* Porphyry; *elſe*, I doubt not, *but they would have given us clear light into the* impoſture *of* Lazarus's *reſurrection.* It is but aſſerting roundly *without* evidence, and then concluding boldly *without* doubt, and the buſineſs is done.

B Are not this ſort of *Jews* and *Infidels* very wiſe believers? But how unlikely this is to be fact, is plain from the progreſs Chriſtianity made, which not only ſpread

* John xii. 9. † Ver. 19. ‡ Mat. xxi. 45, 46. ‖ P. 50

ſpread over all the *Leſſer Aſia*, but in a manner the whole *Roman empire*, in about ſixty years after our Saviour's death. Which, if his *anceſtors* had been able to diſprove *this*, or any other miracle of *Jeſus*, would have been next to impoſſible.

HE needed not to have falſified the *evangelical relation*, but have told a ſtory of the confederacy of *chriſtians* with the *heathen Romans*, in diſſolving the *Jewiſh* ſtate, and *deſtroying their judicial records*, and the *roguery* of theſe *Romans*, when the empire was become chriſtian, in burning all writings againſt them, both *Jewiſh* and *Heathen*; and then have concluded, no doubt *had theſe been remaining, they would have demonſtrated* Chriſtianity *to be* impoſture. And thoſe who will take *his* word, for facts and inferences, have what * *with him is like demonſtration*, againſt it now. Whether *chriſtians* did play ſuch tricks, I cannot ſay. But at the ſame time, I cannot take his word for it, and he brings no vouchers. But if the writings of *his* anceſtors were of the ſame ſort with his, they were very weak to make ſuch deſtruction of them. It was very needleſs labour. If advancing facts *without* vouchers, drawing inferences from premiſes on which they *have no dependance*, and putting off concluſions thus drawn, *with aſſurance* unparallelled, will ruine the evidence of *Chriſtianity*; he'll *diſpatch it without waiting the leiſure of juſtice*. But if *theſe* arms will not deſtroy it, he has *no better* with which to batter or overturn it.

§. VII. *The reſt of the* Rabbi's Letter *conſidered.*

ALL elſe in the *Rabbi*'s letter, that is of moment, turns on the *unlikelihood*, that the *Jews* ſhould perſecute *Jeſus* and *Lazarus*, for ſuch a miracle. But he gives himſelf ſuch indecent liberties throughout, againſt *Jeſus* and his religion, that it can never enter into my head, that it has a *Jew* for its author. No *Rabbi* amongſt them could be ſo void of prudence and decency as to fall foul on the religion of a country, where they have

* P. 45.

have ſuch liberty for *worſhip* and *traffic*, and ſuch protection in *both*, as to call this not only * *the pretended miracle*, but † *wicked impoſture*, ‡ *notorious* impoſture, ‖ *monſtrous* impoſture, as ** *fooliſh and wicked* impoſture *as ever was contrived or tranſacted in the world*; *ſo that it is no wonder the people, with unanimous voice, called for the releaſe of* Barabbas, *a* robber *and* murtherer, *before* Jeſus. This language is bidding defiance to all laws of *civility* and *good-manners*, as well as outraging Chriſtianity. If a *Rabbi* had handed about, ſuch an aſſault on the *profeſſed religion* of *Britain*, clandeſtinely, he would never have been ſo outrageous as to †† deſire its publication, and ‖‖ *claim a reaſonable liberty* of writing in this manner for themſelves. He muſt be ſomewhat worſe than a *Jew*, who could act this part. I dare ſay, 'tis the *ludicrous* Mr. *W.* aſſuming this character, that he might vent his ſpite againſt Chriſtianity in the name of an *Enemy* without reſtraint, and pour out the rancour of his heart, with a *grave face*, and without any *grimace*.

W

B U T let us hear him. *† *Had there been an indiſputable miracle wrought, why were the chief Prieſts and Phariſees ſo incenſed againſt* Jeſus *and* Lazarus, *as to put them to death for it? Where was the provocation? I can ſee none.* But did he never hear a vile and wicked thing done, *without* provocation? What injury has he, in his *double capacity* of B. D. and *Rabbi*, received from *Jeſus* and his religion? I can ſee no provocation, for this outrage to it. What then? Muſt I not therefore believe *mine eyes?* Not to obſerve, that it was not for *the miracle*, that they conſulted to put either *Jeſus* or *Lazarus* to death, as will more fully appear preſently.

B.

W

THOUGH *‖ *the* Jews *were never ſo cankered with malice and hatred to* Jeſus *before, yet ſuch a ſtupendous miracle was enough to ſtop their mouths, and turn their hearts.* If by *enough* he means enough *in reaſon*, he is right. But what is *enough* in *all reaſon*, does not always produce the effects, which might reaſonably have been expected.

* P. 53. † P. 43. ‡ P. 42. ‖ P. 45. ** P. 53.
†† P. 42. ‖‖ P. 54. *† P. 43. *‖ Ibid.

expected. It might reaſonably have been expected, that the wonders God did in *Egypt*, at the *Red-Sea*, and in the *wilderneſs* by *Moſes*, ſhould have cured the unbelief and rebellion of the ancient *Iſraelites*. They *were enough to ſtop their mouths, and turn their hearts.* Yet, if the *letter* of their ſtory deſerves any credit, they had no ſuch effect. Perhaps *their* ſtory, according to the *letter*, is with the *Rabbi brimful of abſurdities* too. But the obſervation will be of ſome weight with all *ſober Jews*, and all others among mankind, who are not for turning all the *hiſtories* and *records* of paſt time, into a *jeſt*.

* OR *if their prejudices againſt* Jeſus *were inſuperable, and they hated him but the more for the number and greatneſs of his miracles; yet why is poor* Lazarus, *inoffenſive* Lazarus *the object of their hatred too?* Your divines *are to give a credible account of this, and ſuch as will comport with* reaſon *and* ſenſe, *or we ſhall conclude it was* fraud *detected, in this pretended miracle, that ſo provoked the indignation of our anceſtors.* But what need have *our divines* to give an account of that, which is already accounted for, by the *Evangeliſt?* And that, in a way *probable, credible, and comporting both with reaſon and ſenſe.* The *Jews* prejudices againſt *Jeſus* and his religion, enraged them againſt *Lazarus.* They were madded to ſee ſuch reſort to him and *Jeſus*, and that, on account of his reſurrection, ſo *many believed.*

‖ To *ſay, which is all can be ſaid*, to be ſure, *that it was mere* inhumanity, *and* barbarity, *and* brutality *in the* Jews, *will not do here.* Why? *It will never go down with reaſonable and unprejudiced men, who muſt have other conceptions of* humane nature *in all ages and nations, than to think it poſſible that a man in* Lazarus's caſe, *can be hated and perſecuted, for having ſuch a good work done on him.* Admit this. What then? *Why then was he hated and perſecuted?* I ſay *for this and no other reaſon* (to be ſure; here *T. W.* appears again) *than becauſe he was a confederate with* Jeſus, *in this wicked impoſture.* Whether the *premiſes* be true or falſe, right or

* P. 43. ‖ P. 43, 44.

or wrong *T. W.* and this *ſedate reaſoner*, are ſure of the *concluſion*. *I ſay for this and no other reaſon*, and then the concluſion is indiſputable. But the *Evangeliſt* has aſſigned *another* reaſon. It was not for the *good work* done on him, but the reſort of the *Jews* to ſee him, and their believing on *Jeſus* hereupon, that *Lazarus* was hated and perſecuted.

And if humane nature *can't poſſibly hate a man meerly on account of his having been raiſed from the dead*; yet humane nature under the ſway of malice and ſpite, may be guilty of *inhumanity*, *barbarity*, and *brutality*, and ſomewhat *worſe*. The *Jews* hated *Jeſus* and his doctrine much; the good-liking the people ſhewed to hear it, and the influence *his miracles* had towards procuring him credit, provoked them more. And the reſurrection of *Lazarus* contributing to the increaſe of his diſciples, added ſtill to their ſpite. Humane minds, under the conduct of *ſuch* paſſions, don't calmly weigh what is humane or juſt, but conſider only what will remove the occaſion of *uneaſineſs*, or gratify the *appetite* to hurt; and if power be not wanting, right or wrong this ſhall be done: And he is a *meer ſtranger* to humane nature in all ages and places, who knows not that this is too common. And *Lazarus*, for the reaſon mentioned, becoming the object of *their* ſpite, his removal would be a natural ſuggeſtion. But he goes on.

W * For *all the reports of your goſpel, it is unnatural to hate a miraculous healer of diſeaſes: and there muſt be ſomewhat ſuppreſt of the reaſon of the* Jews *inveteracy to* Jeſus, *or his healing power muſt have reconciled them to him. But that they ſhould not only hate* Jeſus, *for raiſing the dead, but the perſon raiſed by him, is* improbable, incredible, impoſſible, and therefore the whole goſpel is romance. *Q. E. D.* At leaſt, as his *Rabbi* words it, *'tis like demonſtration.* But alas! this concluſion is drawn from premiſes that never were, nor will be allowed. This is not the *report* of the *goſpels*. It may be as *improbable*, *incredible*, or *impoſſible*, as he pleaſes, *to hate one for being a miraculous healer of diſeaſes, and raiſer of the*

* P. 45.

the dead; and more, *to hate one for having ſuch a good work done on him:* but the *evangelical report* is not therefore *improbable*, &c. The account given of the hatred to *Jeſus* and *Lazarus* in the goſpel, is very different from this.

AND though it be *unnatural* to hate one for miraculouſly healing diſeaſes; will it thence follow, that a *prophet* may not be hated, *who is ſent from heaven to teach a* pure *and* ſpiritual *religion, directly contrary to the taſte and temper of the* hireling prieſts *of that day, who deals plainly with men of all* ſorts and ranks, *uncaſing thoſe in* higheſt eſteem *for ſanctity, and laying open their groſs* hypocriſy, *under a diſguiſe of eminent* devotion, *and that to their very teeth, and ſhewing how they had* corrupted *religion, and in a manner* deſtroyed *it?* Who *proves his authority for what he* does *and* ſays, *by* miraculous powers *and* operations; *and finally*, who *makes diſciples hereupon, and grows every where into eſteem and reputation.* Is it *impoſſible, incredible*, or at all *unlikely*, that he ſhould provoke the wrath of all ſorts, the pretenders to ſanctity, and the *hireling prieſts*, in a particular manner? And when *themſelves* ſunk in eſteem, and the religious *maxims, rites, uſages* which they cried up and magnified, and *by which* they got, and maintained their credit, and procured their wealth, grew into contempt; would the prophet's healing diſeaſes miraculouſly, or raiſing the dead, *reconcile them to him?* And prevail with them too, to renounce all their *favourite ſentiments, emoluments* and *intereſts*, and embrace a religion ſo oppoſite to their *own taſte*, and to *that*, which, in their conceit, came originally from God, and was handed down through *a ſucceſſion* of many ages?

WHICH is moſt likely, according to all accounts of *humane nature*, in all ages and nations; that *theſe men* ſhould *embrace* the doctrines, or *hate* the teacher? And if, for his doctrine's ſake, they hated the teacher, muſt they not hate him *the more*, for his miraculous powers, ſince theſe muſt eſtabliſh his credit? Yea, though they were *powers of healing*. The more good of this ſort he

did, the more *miſchief*, in their account, would he be likely to do, *that is*, the more *hurt* to them. Though they did not hate him as a *miraculous healer*; yet as ſuch a prophet, they would hate him *the more*, for his miraculous powers and operations. And if any one perſon raiſed by him from the dead, did in a particular manner raiſe *his* credit, and procure *him* diſciples, would they not hate *him* too? And if nothing elſe offered, ſo likely to prevent the apprehended miſchief, would they ſtick at taking *both off*; eſpecially if they could do it in a *judicial way*, or by *form* of *law?*

No, ſays he, * *on ſuch a miracle they would be mute as fiſhes, or if they did fret inwardly for the loſs of their intereſts, they would have more prudence than to ſhew their anger openly, and perſecute for it, both agent and patient.* Does not this *Rabbi* talk here, like one perfectly well acquainted with *humane nature*, in all *ages* and *nations?* Does rage againſt one for croſſing *intereſts* and *inclinations*, eſpecially when armed with power, uſe to conſult *prudence?* Any other, I mean, than what will direct in ſecuring valued intereſts, and purſuing beloved inclinations? And is any thing more proper for this purpoſe, than the *removal* of what croſſes or interferes with both? Could it be prudence, in *their* account, to leave ſuch a miracle-worker, to eſtabliſh *his* reputation, and deſtroy both *their* credit and intereſt? Could I believe this *Rabbi* a *Jew*, I could point him to ſome paſſages in their own hiſtory, that would manifeſt this to be ſorry ſophiſtry. But *Rabbi W.* appears ſo manifeſtly here, that it would be loſt labour. He believes as little of the *letter* of the *Old* as he does of the *New Teſtament*.

But in this very ſneer, which is directed to the *Engliſh biſhops* and *clergy*, there is plain evidence, that this is *known* ſophiſtry, and that he is arguing againſt the ſenſe and conviction of his own mind. Theſe *in caſe of a like miracle againſt an* hireling prieſthood, *would be as mute as fiſhes; or if they did fret inwardly, they would have more prudence* (ask them elſe) *than to ſhew their anger.*

* P. 47.

anger. Is not this *parentheſis* manifeſt *irony?* In which one thing is ſaid, and the quite contrary meant, *viz.* that *they would openly ſhew their anger.* And does not Mr. *W.* * decently intimate in his dedication, that the *biſhops* have it in their *heads* and *hearts*, to advance him highly in the world, and deſign him a *myſtical* crown of glory. Can he tell the world, that the *Engliſh biſhops* are ſo much enraged againſt *him*, as openly to ſhew their anger in this manner? And yet tell us, that the miracle muſt have ſilenced all the *hireling prieſts* of that day, who had a much more formidable enemy in *Jeſus*, ſure, than the *Engliſh biſhops* and *clergy* have in Mr. *W.* how much ſoever he ſwells in his own conceit; againſt whom therefore they had much more reaſon to be enraged. To which may be added, that they were a ſet of much wickeder men, according to the account of their own hiſtorian *Joſephus*, if he be to be *literally* interpreted.

‖ IF *hiſtorians*, ſays he, *can parallel this ſtory of the malignity of the* Jews *towards* Jeſus *and* Lazarus, *upon ſuch a* real *miracle, with any thing equally barbarous and inhumane in any other ſect or nation, we will acknowledge the truth of it, againſt* our *ſect and nation. Or if ſuch inhumanity, abſtractedly conſidered, be at all agreeable to the conception any can form of humane nature, in the moſt* uncivilized *and* brutiſh *people, we will allow our anceſtors in that caſe, to be* that people. All this is groſs ſophiſtry, on a *known* wrong ſtate of the fact, *viz. That the miracle was the* ſole cauſe *of the malignity*; the contrary to which ſo manifeſtly appears in the *Evangeliſt*, that Mr. *W.* could not but ſee it. And though hiſtorians *cannot parallel this Caſe*, which in the whole hiſtory of the world, he knows, is not to be parallelled, nor was any thing ever like it but in their *own nation*; yet he knows nothing of *humane nature* who knows not, that *ſuch* malignity growing out of *ſuch cauſes*, is not only very poſſible, but too common among people civilized: and that ſuch have practiſed *barbarity* and *inhumanity*,

* P. iv, v. ‖ P. 46.

that would have been ſhocking to the more *brutal* and *uncivilized*, nay the moſt ſo among the nations.

ONE could wiſh nothing like it occurred in their *own* hiſtory. But there hardly was a *prophet* amongſt them from *Moſes* to *Jeſus*, even though he wrought *miracles*, but provoked the rage of that people, and was hated and perſecuted by them, and in danger of his life. *Moſes* himſelf could not eſcape their reſentments. Not long after he had miraculouſly brought them out of *Egypt*, and ſaved them at the *Red Sea*, he complains to God, that * *they were ready to ſtone him.* At the report of the ſpies, † *the whole congregation murmured againſt* Moſes *and* Aaron, *and bade ſtone* Caleb *and* Joſhua, if not *Moſes* and *Aaron* too. ‖ At another time, *They gathered themſelves together againſt* Aaron *and againſt* Moſes. Does not ‡ God himſelf charge them, with being *a ſtiff-necked people?* And *Moſes* tells them, ** *They did not believe, but had been rebellious from the day he knew them.*

DID not *Elijah* work miracles, and among the reſt, †† raiſe a dead child to life? Yet he complains ‖‖ that the *children of* Iſrael *had forſaken God's covenant, and* ſlain *his* prophets, *that he only was left, and they ſought* his life *too, becauſe he was jealous for the* LORD GOD *of Hoſts.*

ELISHA alſo wrought miracles, raiſed the *Shunamite*'s ſon, *‖ ſupplied the army of king *Joram* and his confederates, with water, *&c.* Yet did not this very king, when in the ſiege of *Samaria* they ſuffered famine, and a woman complained to him againſt her neighbour, for hiding her ſon, when ſhe had promiſed he ſhould be ſlain and dreſt, as hers had been before, *† ſwear, *that the head of* Eliſha *ſhould not ſtand on him that day?* And this without any provocation. Did the *Jews* therefore, in *Jeſus*'s caſe, act otherwiſe than their fore-fathers had done, only that they now carried their rancour higher, as they were nearer *filling up the*

* Exod. xvii. 4. † Numb. xiv. 2, 10. ‖ Numb. xx. 3. ‡ Deut. ix. 13. ** Ver. 23, 24 †† 1 Kings xvii. 22. ‖‖ Ch. xix. 14. *‖ 2 Kings iii. 20. *† Ch. vi. 27—31.

the meaſure of their ſins? Or are all theſe things *improbable, incredible,* and *impoſſible* in the letter without the myſtery? No doubt. For this ſame *Rabbi* and *T. W.* are the ſelf-ſame perſon, in the two different characters of a *ſedate reaſoner* and a *ſportive buffoon.* But he goes on.

* SUCH *a* real *and* indiſputable *miracle, were it now to be wrought, in confirmation of Chriſtianity,* I dare ſay, *would bring all us* Jews, to a man, *into the belief of it.* And I dare ſay this is *T. W.* again, from the *daring* aſſurance appearing in it. *And I do not think it poſſible for any people, to be ſo biaſſed, bigotted, and prejudiced, as not to be wrought on by it.* And his *I don't think* ſo, is demonſtration. *Or if they would not part with their intereſts and prejudices upon it, they would have more* wit *and* temper, *than to break out into a rage againſt* all *or* any *concerned in it.* This is a good hearing concerning the *Jews,* might one take *his* word for it. If it be fact, they are much mended.

I would refer this *Rabbi* to the account given of them of old by the *Pſalmiſt,* who recounts many *real* and *indiſputable* miracles, wrought amongſt them, but yet ever and anon comes in ſomewhat, to make out the *general character* given them at the beginning, † *a ſtubborn and rebellious generation.* Thus, ‖ *he clave the rock, and gave them waters as out of the great depths--and they ſinned yet more againſt him.* ‡ *He gave them their deſire, but whilſt the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them. For all this they ſinned ſtill, and* believed not *for his* wondrous works. ** *He caſt the heathen out before them, and divided them an inheritance by line*——Yet *they provoked the moſt high God, and kept not his teſtimonies, but turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like* their fathers, *and provoked him to anger with their high-places, and moved him to jealouſy with their images.* Theſe *undoubted* miracles did not prevail with them to obſerve their *own* religion: how well-grounded an aſſurance, now, has *Rabbi W.* that *one* ſuch miracle would now bring them all, *to a man,* into the belief of Chriſtianity?

* P. 46. † Pſ. lxxviii. 8. ‖ Ver. 15, 17. ‡ Ver. 29--32. ** Ver. 55--59.

Chriſtianity? And after this account of them from their own *Sacred Writings*, what does his *I don't think that any people can be ſo bigotted, biaſſed*, &c. argue, but his own unparallel'd aſſurance? But let us hear him out.

* MANKIND *may in ſome caſes be ſo obdurate, and ſo hard of belief, as to ſtand it out againſt* ſenſe, reaſon, *and* demonſtration; *but I will not think worſe of our anceſtors, than the reſt of mankind, or that they any more than* others, *would have withſtood a clear and* indiſputable *miracle in* Lazarus's *reſuſcitation.* We charge not this *Rabbi's* anceſtors with an obduracy, in the caſe, *ſuperior* to that of the *reſt* of *mankind.* Others, as well as they, diſbelieved Chriſtianity, in ſpite of *indiſputable* miracles, and hated and perſecuted the preachers of it, though they *healed the ſick* and *raiſed the dead:* and that out of intereſt and prejudices in favour of a *much worſe* religion, than that of the *Jews*, viz. *groſs heathen idolatry*, of which the *Jews* had been cured, long before the time of *Jeſus.* And yet if we did, the account given of them in their own *Sacred Books*, might bear us out herein. For ſays God to *Ezekiel*, † *Thou art not ſent to a people of* ſtrange ſpeech *and an* hard language; *but to the* people *of* Iſrael: *not to many people of a ſtrange ſpeech and an hard language, which thou canſt not underſtand.* Surely *had I ſent thee to* them, they *would have hearkened to* thee. *But the* houſe *of* Iſrael *will not hearken to* thee, *for they will not hearken to* me. *For all the houſe of* Iſrael *are impudent and hard-hearted. But as an adamant, harder than flint, have I made thy forehead. Fear them not, neither be diſmayed at their looks, though they be a* rebellious houſe.

BUT this prophet wrought no miracles, whereas ‖ *ſuch a* manifeſt miracle, *let it be wrought for what end and purpoſe we can poſſibly imagine, would ſtrike men with* awe *and* reverence. *And none could hate or perſecute the author of the miracle.* Why? *Leſt he who could raiſe the dead ſhould exert his power againſt* themſelves, *and either* wound *or* ſmite *them* dead *with it.* And what then?

* P. 43. † Ezek. iii. 5—10. ‖ P. 48.

then? *Therefore the reſurrection of* Lazarus, *on the certain knowledge of our anceſtors, was* all fraud. *Q. E. D.* Theſe anceſtors of his, had not this been the caſe, *would have reverenced and adored* Jeſus's *power. To be ſure,* as Mr. *W.* ſays. And this aſſurance in theſe *two authors* in *one,* is demonſtration, at leaſt *with them* it is *like it.* I agree with this *letter-writer,* that fear and reverence, on ſuch a miracle, were very reaſonable. And did men *always* act, *as* reaſon adviſes, this fear, in ſuch a caſe, would lay them under reſtraint, and make them *ſhew more* wit *and* temper *than to rage againſt any concerned in it,* as he * elſewhere has it. But he who knows any thing of humane nature, knows the *bulk* of *mankind,* both in higher and lower life, are more led by *intereſt, appetite,* and *paſſion* than by reaſon; and that reaſon, with the aid of *miracles,* does not always get the better of theſe propenſions.

I ſuppoſe this *Rabbi* has read in their own ſacred ſtory, that † *Aaron* and *Miriam* once ſpake againſt *Moſes,* as if he took too much upon him, ſince they alſo *were prophets:* and making an handle of his marrying *the Ethiopian woman,* ſought to depreciate him in the peoples eſteem, and raiſe a ſpirit of ſedition againſt him. God hereupon interpoſes, ſhews the ſuperiority of *Moſes* to them and other prophets; and *Miriam* is hereupon ſtruck with a *leproſy.* Here was an *unqueſtionable* miracle, and juſt reflections would have poſſeſſed all with a fear of doing the like.

YET in a little while ‡ *Corah, Dathan,* and *Abiram,* with *two hundred* and *fifty princes more, men of renown in the congregation,* are engaged in a freſh ſedition againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron.* And when God had ſhewn his diſpleaſure againſt *them,* ‖ *by cauſing the earth to open and ſwallow them up alive,* the very next day, inſtead of being impreſſed with *fear,* by this awful inſtance of miraculous power, ** *the congregation murmur againſt* Moſes *and* Aaron, and charge them with *ſlaying the* LORD's *people*; and ſeem diſpoſed, in Mr. *W*'s language,

* P. 46. † Numb. xii. ‡ Ch. xvi. ‖ Ver. 32, 34.
** Ver. 41, 42.

guage, to *ſacrifice them*. If ſuch miraculous puniſhments, awakened none of theſe *reaſonable fears*, in the anceſtors of theſe *Jews*, what room is there to ſuppoſe, that thoſe in the time *of Jeſus*, ſhould by the fear of his *wounding* or *ſmiting them dead*, be kept in temper, when he had exerted no miraculous powers in puniſhing or deſtroying any? Were *they* more reaſonable, more fearful, or had they more command of their temper, than their *forefathers*.

* ELIJAH wrought a miracle in *calling for fire from heaven*, to *conſume his ſacrifice*; and this at a convention of the people of *Iſrael* on a royal ſummons, together with all the *prophets* of *Baal* and the *Groves*; and that after a challenge that *he* ſhould be owned for God, whoſe *prophet* ſhould fetch down fire for this purpoſe. This, it is to be hoped, was an *indiſputable* miracle done in preſence of *King Ahab* and all *Iſrael*. It wrought conviction, for the preſent, on all, that *Jehovah* was God, and *Elijah*'s the true religion; and they aſſiſt in ſeizing *Baal*'s prophets, whom *Elijah* ſlew. And immediately after brings rain from heaven, after three years drought.——But was every one impreſs'd with *fear* hereupon, that he who could by his prayers bring down *fire* from heaven, and procure either *rain* or *drought*, could avenge himſelf on thoſe who hated him? Were they, *to a man*, reconciled to him and his religion? *Jezebel*, it is certain, was not thus impreſſed; for, upon the news, ſhe immediately ſends him a meſſage, † *ſwearing by her gods, that by to-morrow, ſhe would have his life*. He had exaſperated her, indeed, by ſhewing the *falſhood* of her religion, and ſlaying the *prophets* of *Baal*. But he had ‡ before raiſed the widow's ſon of *Zarephath*, he had that very day in *King Ahab*, her huſband's ſight, fetched fire from heaven: and was not a fear in her caſe reaſonable, that *his power ſhould be exerted againſt* her, *and either* wound *her*, *or* ſmite her dead?——Nay, the *Iſraelites*, though they own themſelves convinced on the ſpot, that *his* religion

* 1 Kings xviii. † 1 Kings xix. 1, 2. ‡ Chap. xvii. 22.

gion was the *true*, after this miracle, yet * *ſought his life.*

AND being now on *this paſſage*, I would remind this *Rabbi*, that upon *Jezebel*'s threats, *Elijah* abſconds, and gets into the wilderneſs as well as *Jeſus*, even after an *undoubted* miracle, wherein could be no fraud, and that done before *king Ahab* and all *Iſrael*. How like to demonſtration now, is his argument? Jeſus *and his* diſciples *abſcond after raiſing* Lazarus. †*Is not here a plain ſign of* guilt *and* fraud? *Men who have God's cauſe, and truth, and power on their ſide, never want* reſolution *to ſtand to it.* Alas! for poor *abſconding Elijah!* ſo famous for his zeal and reſolution in God's cauſe. His reputation is gone at once. Had there not been a *cheat detected, he had not been ſo timorous and cowardly, but would have undauntedly faced his enemies, without fear or apprehenſions of danger.* Ahab *unqueſtionably had diſcovered the fraud to* Jezebel, *and complained of it* (as the *Jews* in *Lazarus*'s caſe to the Phariſees) for he ‖ brings her the news *of what* Elijah *had done*, and *how the intrigue was managed, and ſhe was in the right to proſecute him with ſeverity.*

DARES a *Rabbi* talk thus in *Elijah*'s caſe? And yet *nec ovum ovo ſimilius.* It is an exact parallel to that of *Jeſus* here, only that *Elijah* is the greater abſconder. But indeed *Elijah* diſcovered neither fraud nor guilt. There was, there could be no impoſture. The ſame is to be ſaid in *Jeſus*'s caſe, with reſpect to *Lazarus.* But *Jezebel* threatens *Elijah*'s life, and he *wiſely* gets out of *her* reach. The *Jews* conſult to put *Jeſus* to death, and he as *prudently* gets out of *their's.* But when God has a meſſage for him to *king Ahab*, *Elijah* fearleſſly goes, meets him and delivers it. And when it was proper for him, *Jeſus* goes up to *Jeruſalem*, makes a publick entry into it, appears daily in the temple, *undauntedly faces his enemies*, deals plainly with them, denounces God's judgments againſt them, and at length meekly yields himſelf into their hands, that they might

* 1 Kings xix. 14. † P. 44. ‖ Ch. xix. 1.

have their wills on him, and *put him to death*, a main end of his coming into the world. Is here any appearance of *cowardice*, *guilt*, or *fraud?*

THESE *circumſtances* in the ſtory of *Lazarus*'s reſurrection needed not, therefore, have given Mr. *W.* any pain for Chriſtianity. His *Rabbi* has been fully heard, and all he has to ſay, as fully proved, it is to be hoped, not to affect the *credit* of the *evangelical* ſtory, nor of the *religion* of *Jeſus*.

CONCLUSION.

EVERY thing in Mr. *W*'s diſcourſe, in which Chriſtians have any concern, has been now conſidered, and the weakneſs of it made out. As to the *myſtery* which he believes, he ſays, on the *authority* of the *fathers*, he may make as merry with it as he pleaſes. If *chriſtians* may, on the authority of the *Evangeliſts*, believe that *Jeſus* wrought miracles, in confirmation of this *heavenly doctrine*, delivered by Himſelf and Apoſtles, *he* may believe what he will of their *myſtical* meaning, on the authority of *Bede*, *Theophanes Cerameus*, &c. or even *Origen*, *Ambroſe*, *Auguſtine*, &c. though his belief can be of little importance to himſelf or others: no one alive knowing, when he is *in jeſt* or *in earneſt*, if ever he be *in earneſt* in any thing, beſides turning every thing into *jeſt*.

SUCH a way of talking may make *mirth* for infidels, of gay humour and little thought, with whom a *low*, *leud*, or *profane* jeſt may paſs for wit, and grimace for argument; but can never pleaſe the *ſober* or *well-bred part* of mankind. Such can never take *banter* for argument, *a jack-pudding* for a man of wit and ſenſe, nor a *bully* and *bluſterer* for an hero. Such can never be pleaſed to ſee things ſacred treated not only with *irreverence* and *contempt*, but with downright *ſcurrility*: or a B. D. on the moſt awful ſubject in the world, turn *Merry-Andrew*, even in his *graduate's gown*, and after pouring

pouring out his *froth*, give himſelf the *airs* of a *judge*, decide againſt Chriſtianity, pronounce *Jeſus* an impoſtor, his *Evangeliſts* dotards and blunderers, and all chriſtians of all ages paſt and preſent, ſuch a *generation* of *blockheads*, as to ſwallow without chewing things *improbable*, *incredible*, *impoſſible*, and what all who underſtand human nature as well as *he*, muſt admit for ſuch.

CAN one who makes ſuch a figure, ſuch a *jeſter*, ſuch a *ſwaggerer*, with ſo *ludicrous* an air and ſo *brazen* a forehead, with ſo *little* reaſon, ſuch *ſportive* ſpeech, and yet with ſuch an *exceſs* of aſſurance, one always *in jeſt*, and yet ſo *peremptory*, *definitive* and *aſſuming*, make any impreſſion on one ſerious enquirer after truth in the world? Could I think at all, I ſhould ſay, methinks he ſhould not.

OR can ſuch *rudeneſs* and *indecency* againſt *Jeſus* and his *Religion*, *Evangeliſts*, *Diſciples* in general, and particular perſons even his *ſuperiors*, ever recommend him or his diſcourſes, to any above the rank of *carmen* and *porters*? Muſt not every one who has the leaſt regard to *good manners*, ſicken at the nauſeous recurring of ſuch ſtuff, in almoſt every page, unleſs his *ſpite* to Chriſtianity can reconcile him to ſuch *outrageous* treſpaſſes on all the rules of *civility* and *decency*? Or can any who have the leaſt regard for *honour* or *honeſty*, bear with ſuch plain, barefaced and undiſguiſed falſifications and miſrepreſentations of the *evangelical ſtory*, and other authors cited by him.

IF he has any *ſerious doubts* concerning any circumſtances of the *goſpel ſtory*, let him have liberty to propoſe them, in their utmoſt ſtrength, and defend them in fair becoming debate, if he thinks they are not anſwered. His *proſecution*, even for his ſcurrility, I cannot approve, and have in the *preface* offered my reaſons. But if he ever writes again, I would intreat him, for his *own* ſake, to temper his *facetious* humour, and write like *a man*, a *ſcholar*, with a *ſeriouſneſs*, *majeſty* and *ſtrength* becoming the ſolemnity of the ſubject.

In

In his preſent way he muſt write himſelf out of credit with all the ſober world. He can make no *proſelytes* but among the loweſt of mankind, nor give any *entertainment*, but to *rakes* and *witlings*; and ſuch as can give no proof of their being *rational*, but their being *riſible*, and by laughing at every thing, make *themſelves* the ſcorn and contempt of all men of *ſenſe* and *ſobriety*.

Dec. 14. 1731.

THE END.

5 OC 57